

Calvinist Contact

A Reformed Weekly

AUGUST 23, 1991/47th year of publication/No. 2270

Natives must flourish in pluralistic Canada, conference affirms

Robert VanderVennen

FT. ERIE, Ont. — There are Native people in our future — what are we going to do about it?

This challenging question was thrown out by Rev. Ross Maracle at the recent annual Niagara Family Conference of the Institute for Christian Studies. Maracle is a member of the Mohawk tribe and has lived on reservations all his life.

Native people are in transition, he said, with the Oka crisis of last summer giving vent to repressed Native feelings. The condition of Native Canadians is deplorable, Maracle emphasized to his Caucasian audience.

Yes, no Natives died at the Oka standoff. But how many Native young people of ages 14-22 committed suicide during the days the barricades were up? Alcohol, drug abuse and self-mutilation are other common ways Natives show the meaninglessness of their lives, he added. Prisons are revolving doors for Natives. Currently 47 per cent of female prisoners in Canada are Natives.

Natives on northern reservations have TV and see pictures of the white person's heaven, of which they want part. There are 60,000 Natives on Canada's 2,274 reservations, but today there are more Natives than that in Canadian cities.

"How many churches for native people do you know of in the cities?" asked Maracle. "I don't know of any." We need to evangelize the Natives in our cities, yet there is a low level of evangelistic commitment to Native people.

Call for Native self-government

Maracle called for self-government for Native people, for their own judicial system and for jobs and resources that will give independence and dignity to their lives. Yet it's extremely hard to move a person from a hunting and trapping culture to a time-clock culture, he acknowledged.

Maracle himself has a vision for the Christian education of Native leaders. He has founded and is president of the National Native Bible College on the reservation at Deseronto, Ontario, near Belleville. One of his programs is to train Natives for radio broadcasting on the low-power FM radios on remote reservations. He says that Natives and all Canadians also need to know more of the history of their culture.

Maracle was one of several speakers at the conference who illustrated the need for a commitment to pluralism in Canada. Pluralism, said keynote speaker Paul Marshall, means that

people live together harmoniously in spite of their differences on important matters of belief and way of life. He accented that these important differences have been thrust upon us not because of immigration of foreigners but because of the secularity of the descendents of past generations of European Christians.

Pluralism is not the same as secularism, which is Christianity driven to the edges of life, said Marshall. Nor does it mean that all alternatives are equally good. Pluralism is simply a fact of life today.

Marshall called for making room for groups that share different ideas. Then society displays real differences. Not to do that may preserve individual differences, which may be expressed only in private but not communally. The secularist wants to destroy public differences, said Marshall, so that one would not be able publicly to be Christian, or Native, or Quebecois.

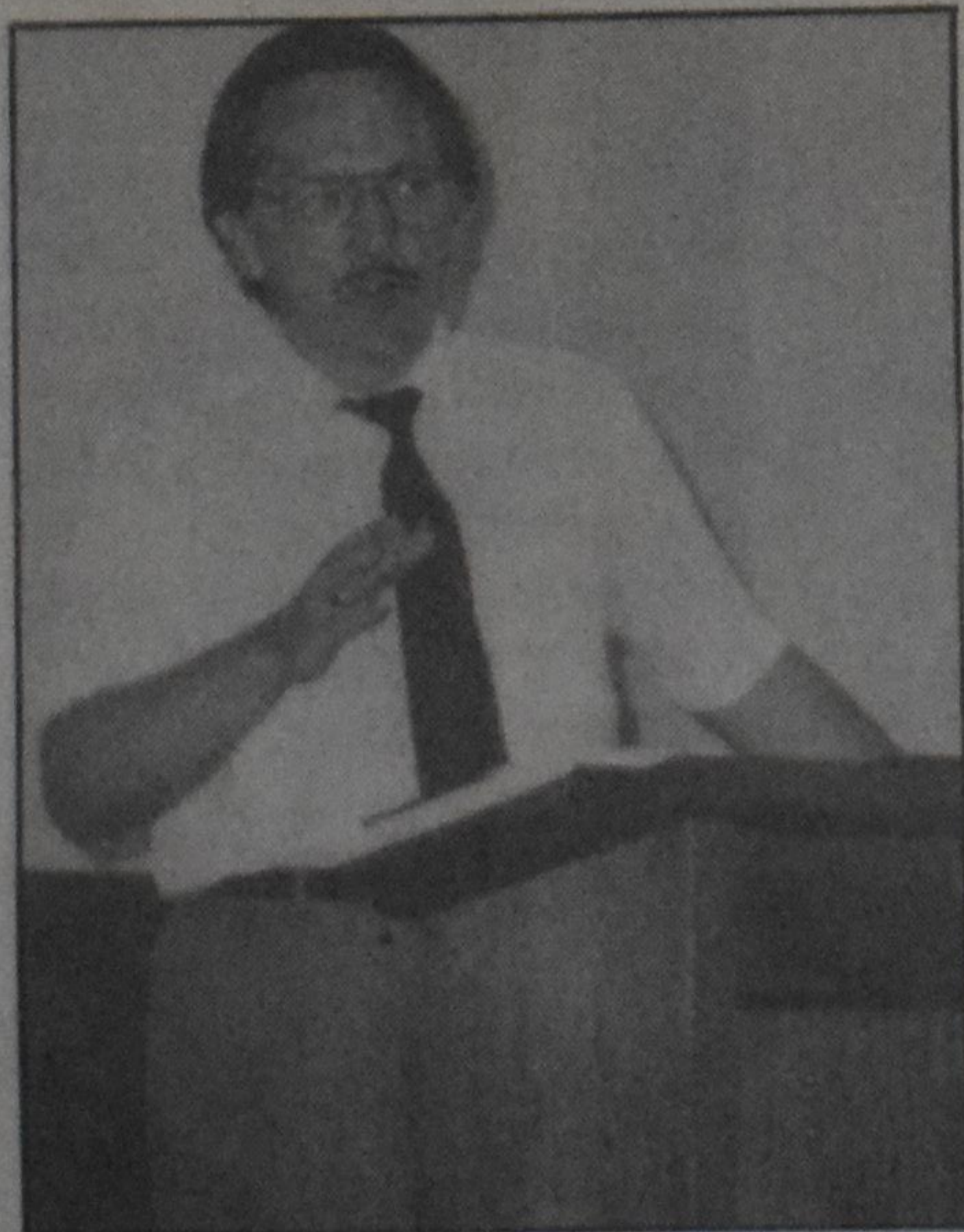


Photo: Robert VanderVennen
Ross Maracle says that Native people are in our future.

Thinkbit:

Cleaning the house while children are growing is like shoveling the walk while it's snowing.

From: Phyllis Diller

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Reformed relief agency not expecting losses in international bank scandal



Photo: C.C. files

Depositors are caught by surprise as BCCI is closed down.

Alison de Groot

BURLINGTON, Ont. — The director of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee-Canada (CRWRC) says he doesn't expect the organization to lose any of its estimated \$150,000 deposited with the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), which had its assets frozen pending criminal charges including fraud, money laundering and theft.

Arms, drugs and gold

Ray Elgersma made these comments in a letter distributed by the CRWRC to church deacons. In his statement he describes BCCI as a bank of false profits gained in illicit arms, drug and gold trading and in money laundering.

BCCI, its founder and a top official, were indicted in New York in what that area's District Attorney Robert Morgenthau called the largest bank fraud in world history.

Elgersma says the CRWRC had been using BCCI for the committee's international money transfers to its overseas programs until the bank was closed by the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI) on July 5.

"Our Canadian bank could not provide service to some of the 30 countries where CRWRC works," Elgersma explains. BCCI "was in all countries where we work, had a 20-year history with \$20 billion in assets and provided excellent service at very competitive bank rates. We felt that we were being stewardly in our use of this bank."

Accounts frozen

Elgersma goes on to say that when the CRWRC began learning of the bank's criminal activities in early June, they began transferring assets out of the bank with the intention of phasing out by the end of this month, leaving time to change cheque books in the field, clear cheques in transit and arrange options with another bank.

But accounts were frozen in July when the OSFI closed the bank. However, Elgersma feels assured that the CRWRC's claims will be returned as

BCCI "appears to be solvent in Canada."

Michael MacKenzie, superintendent of Financial Institutions (OSFI) was quoted in the *Financial Post* as saying there would not be much of a shortfall, if any, between assets and depositor's claims as a result of close scrutiny of BCCI by the OSFI for the past three years.

Betrayed and angered

In response to MacKenzie's comments, Elgersma says the CRWRC is "thankful that there has been direction and supervision provided by our governmental regulating bodies to prevent losses for users of this bank."

"We are sorry that we have used this bank," says Elgersma. "We feel betrayed because we assumed that BCCI was a reputable institution. We feel anger because this bank has been stealing from the very people that we are attempting to help."

Elgersma predicts that many businesses in the Third World will be bankrupted by BCCI's fraud.

International fraud

BCCI is reportedly the subject of investigations that range from payoffs to former governments in Peru and Guatemala to alleged financing of the terrorist activities of Abu Nidal. The Bank of England is emphasizing the U.S. connection, confirming BCCI's controlling interest in First American Bank and accusing BCCI of using First American to finance fraud around the globe, *Newsweek* recently reported.

"We feel tainted by our affiliation with them (BCCI)," says Elgersma.

The majority of the CRWRC's funds are with the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and the \$150,000 tied up with BCCI is nominal considering the CRWRC's \$300,000 monthly operating cost.

CRWRC-U.S. has not used BCCI, which had only two agencies open in the U.S., one in New York and one in California. BCCI had already been issued a U.S. federal order to close down after the bank pleaded guilty in January, 1990, to money laundering charges.

News

Cuban pastors see Spirit at work in homeland

Bert Witvoet

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — "The churches in Cuba are growing," says Rev. Homero Carbonell, secretary general of the Baptist Fellowship of Western Cuba. His statement confirms other reports that Cubans are being drawn towards the gospel, even though the country is still officially atheist and communist.

Carbonell was in Canada along with Rev. Antonio Perez, president of the Baptist Fellowship. Their fellowship in western Cuba represents 103 churches and is over a hundred years old. While here, both attended the general council of the Baptist World Alliance held in Montreal. On their way to the Niagara Falls they stopped in St. Catharines to visit the *Calvinist Contact* office.

Personal conversions

Carbonell, who used to be a nominal Catholic, explained that he himself accepted the gospel on January 14 of 1959. "The gospel was a new thing, a new experience for me," he said. "Before that time I was a young person without a sense of direction."

Perez, on the other hand, said that he was converted in 1956 through the radio message by one Domingo Fernando. This was three years before the

Cuban Revolution brought Fidel Castro and his communist friends to power. Someone in Perez' family contacted Domingo Fernando, who in turn contacted a local Baptist pastor, who then visited the Perezes. Antonio and his two sisters then joined the local Baptist church. "Before that I was nothing," says Perez, referring to the matter of religious adherence.

Now that both men are pastors and leaders in their convention they are extremely busy. Perez directs the western office, pastors two churches, is the director of a Baptist seminary and teaches New Testament as well.

Carbonell is the general secretary of the convention, pastors a church and four other missions.

Separation of church and state

Both men say that the medical care in Cuba is good and that education is free. Their children attend various schools from primary to university. They were reluctant to speak about the attitude of the Cuban government towards the churches or vice versa. They did say that inside the church walls they are free to preach the full gospel.

"We believe in the principle of the separation of church and

state," said Carbonell. "We pray for the government and we minister to all Cubans, communists and non-communists."

"We have considered the worth of all governments in the world," adds Perez, "and we are convinced that the only kingdom that has eternal value is the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. We work in that kingdom."

When this reporter asked Perez whether the church ever praises the communist government, he merely smiled. When this reporter suggested that even the Apostle Paul praised King Agrippa, Perez answered somewhat enigmatically and in Spanish:

"Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's."



Photo: Bert Witvoet

Rev. Homero Carbonell (r.) functioned as interpreter for Rev. Antonio Perez.

Both men requested that the churches in Canada pray for the churches in Cuba,

extending moral and spiritual support. "We will pray for your churches," they added.

Procter & Gamble revises bedeviled logo

CINCINNATI, Ohio (EP) — Procter & Gamble is "modernizing" its man-in-the-moon logo which has been a source of controversy and ill-founded rumours of satanic involvement.

The company denies that the change is being made to quell false rumours the logo is a satanic symbol. "That's balderdash," says P&G's Terry Loftus. "There's no way we would change it to please the rumormongers spreading those lies."

The new logo eliminates some curls of hair that could be taken to look like the number six. The logo will continue to show a bearded man in a crescent moon, surrounded by stars, but with a more streamlined look. "The moon and stars remain an important company trademark and we will continue to use it

broadly," says Loftus.

However, the logo has been steadily disappearing from Procter & Gamble products since 1985. Also, the company has introduced two new corporate logos to complement the moon symbol. The logos include a script "Procter & Gamble" and "P&G."

Despite repeated denials and letters of support from respected religious leaders, Procter & Gamble has continued to be victimized by rumours of satanic involvement. According to the most persistent rumour, the president of the company is supposed to have appeared on television's "Donahue" show and admitted that the company supports the church of Satan. But in fact, no Procter & Gamble official has ever appeared on "Donahue."

Across the Globe

David T. Koyzis

Power corrupts

The movement for democracy has now made its way onto the African continent, where one-party states have been the rule for most of the last 30 years. Zambia is a good example of this trend. Kenneth Kaunda has been president of that country since 1964 when Britain granted independence to what had been known as Northern Rhodesia. Now Kaunda has agreed to adopt a constitution permitting multi-party elections in October. If these are free and fair, then he may well lose, given the current mood of the country. He has not, of course, *willingly* moved to democratize his country's political system; months of unrest have forced him to concede these changes.

By all accounts Kaunda is a Christian and a good man. It is undoubtedly with the best of intentions that he has ruled his country for the past quarter century. His desire to remain in power may be motivated by the sincere belief that he knows what is best for the people of Zambia and that without him the country would fall into chaos. But Kaunda's power has not been limited by the constitutional checks that one normally associates with democratic polities, and herein lies the danger. Apart from the fact that his economic policies have bankrupted the country, the temptation to misuse power has been great. During his long tenure in office opponents have been jailed and martial law has been imposed twice.

Most of us are acquainted with Lord Acton's famous dictum that power tends to corrupt and that absolute power corrupts absolutely. Americans may be more conscious of this than Canadians. As popular as George Bush is right now, few Americans would want their Republican president to have his way on everything, especially in domestic policy, where he is thought to be weak. So they have twice voted to keep the Congress in the hands of opposition Democrats. Of course, the American electoral system permits them to divide their votes in this way, an opportunity

Canadians sometimes envy.

Sad to say, even Christians are not exempt from Acton's observation. Reinhold Niebuhr was acutely aware of the tendency of the "children of light" to underestimate the power of self-will, especially in themselves. Thus, on achieving power — whether in political or other contexts — righteous people with high ideals and lofty goals are as liable as the unrighteous to fall prey to the temptations of pride.

This is why many Christians favour constitutional democracy as a political system. We carry no illusions about the supposed infallibility of the people's general will. We do not believe that the people are always right. But we do believe that power in the hands of the few — even if they are believers — becomes dangerous when it is not accountable. In such instances authority degenerates into paternalism at best and tyranny at worst. The holding of periodic elections, in which there is genuine choice, is a potent means of keeping those in authority accountable and preventing them becoming high-handed and imperious. Legal limitations on the offices themselves are even more crucial.

What does this mean for countries in Africa and elsewhere? The legitimacy of would-be "philosopher-kings" such as Kaunda wears thin after a while, and citizens will eventually demand a say in making the policies that affect their lives. Although Zambians undoubtedly owe much to the man who led them to independence, Kaunda cannot expect to enjoy their confidence forever and may have to step aside this fall. Assuming the effectiveness of the new constitution, his successor will occupy a presidency with curtailed powers.

David T. Koyzis is assistant professor of political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

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Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



Let's catch up a little bit on politics on the home front. That old, once powerful Ontario Tory Blue Machine is, as the saying goes, "dead meat." Not to worry, though. The old faithful have gone to their reward on various boards and agencies where they have been placed on the payroll.

The Ontario Liberals, swept away by the NDP tidal wave, are not doing much better. They chose old-timer, stand-by minister of anything and everything, Murray Elston, as their second interim leader in less than a year. It all happened in secret without any hooplah.

Ontario Premier Bob Rae choreographed a minor cabinet shuffle and the B.C. Socreds elected Rita Johnson as the country's first female premier, which made "Amazing Grace McCarthy" pack it in, more or less gracefully.

★★★

The country's premiers will meet August 26 and 27 at Whistler, B.C. The Canadian Forces base at Goose Bay, Labrador, will probably be closed in the future. The Yankees have already gone home and the English, Germans and Dutch who also use the base are expected to do the same. In Alberta a few people swear that the spotted hyena — native to Africa — is running loose in bush and farm country north of Edmonton. I read also, however, that certain liquor stores in Edmonton open at 8 a.m., and I wonder whether there is any relation between those two facts.

★★★

External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall got into the free trade fracas when she threatened the U.S. with reciprocal measures against Washington's new proposed immigration rules which would restrict appearances by arts and other performers from Canada and other countries. President Bush better take it easy on this subject: Ms. McDougall in anger is a fearful prospect.

A Federal Court judge postponed his decision in the Luitjen's case till September. Luitjen was convicted in absentia in 1948 by a Dutch court of collaborating with the Nazis by rounding up Jews during W.W. II. Federal prosecutors want to strip Luitjen of his Canadian citizenship and then deport him. Most war criminals, it seems, will die before earthly justice catches up with them.

★★★

The country is on the brink of another crisis: there is a pressing shortage of pennies. Annual production of that coin amounts to 750 million and the Royal Canadian Mint has increased production by 25 per cent. But there are still not enough of the coins around. Do they still show up in collection plates?

★★★

Mila Mulrone, according to *Maclean's*, stole the London G-7 fashion sideshow, while *The Times* of London reported that Monsieur changed shirts five times a day. Judging from other press releases there wasn't much more to be said about that pow wow.

★★★

Mr. Richard Early, head of the Canadian Stress Institute, says that the average North American family has only 14 minutes of conversation a day. He should tell that to my grandchildren who are visiting. They never quit conversing. The other day I visited the candy counter at a nearby convenience store which announces that it is open 24 hours, seven days a week. After pondering that advertisement Carl Jr. asked, "Opa, why do they have a lock on the door?"

★★★

And I guess all *Calvinist Contact* readers want to know how Flora MacDonald is doing. Flora, who never received any pork barrel appointment after her long service in Tory cabinets, is doing fine, thank you. The *Globe and Mail* even knows that she and John Turner are two prominent candidates for the Ontario lieutenant governor's job which becomes available in the fall. Don't always believe the *Globe and Mail*, though; they have been wrong before.

★★★

The Moscow Summit was a success. Bush and Gorbachev signed away a whole lot of strategic weapons of mass destruction. President

Bush, according to two columnists in the *Financial Times*, behaves "as if he were the president of the world rather than just the United States." They were referring to Bush's speech at the Moscow State Institute in which the President seemed to lecture the Russians, which some regarded as a breach of protocol. It wouldn't be the first time. During his visit to Queen Elizabeth, Bush sat down before the Queen was seated. Her Majesty was not amused.

Richard Gwyn points out in the *Toronto Star* that the United States is once again confident that it has the right — and the power — to decide what is right and wrong for others. We observe the re-emergence of the kind of America that dominated the World's stage from 1945 till 1975.

World markets, though, frown at the American deficit which now amounts to \$3.5 trillion. That number is mostly beyond anyone's understanding, but let me reduce it to a more understandable terms: one trillion dollars would allow every living person in the world a week's paycheque at minimum wage. It also would pay for an average-sized, in-ground concrete swimming pool for every homeowner in the U.S.A. Three-and-a-half trillion dollars is big bucks, take it from me.

★★★

★★★

The European Community will impose a minimum of 15 per cent VAT (Value Added Tax) when it becomes a single trading market on January 1993. The different members would, of course, be allowed to imposed higher rates on selected goods. There is unrest among art dealers in France, where the socialist government has applied the VAT to the auction houses and art

galleries. I presume everybody knows the 12 member-countries of the EEC. Let me not presume too much. They are: Britain, Ireland, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal.

★★★

The EEC is especially hostile to Japanese infiltration of its markets. Edith Cresson, France's premier, is an outspoken critic of Japan. She described the Japanese as "ants bent on taking over the Western world."

★★★

The Soviet Union's empty store shelves are partly due to the country's overspending on its military machine. Defence spending still accounts for one-third of the U.S.S.R.'s collapsing gross national product. The United States spends five per cent of its GNP on military expenses.

★★★

What shall we say about Yugoslavia? It's the old story of hatred. The mutually shared venom that divides Croats and Serbs is akin to the old Cain loathing for Abel, and Cain's blood pulses in our veins.

★★★

In Kuwait, where foreigners are still trying to extinguish the burning oil wells and clear the minefields while the sheiks enjoy themselves, visas granted to visitors still read: "This permit is considered invalid if bearer obtained an Israeli visa." Perhaps President Bush can get those oil stinkers to get real.

★★★

At Sholl's Colonial Cafeteria in Washington, D.C., they have started using cash registers to tally customers' bills before rather than after customers eat. The reason: the people who run the place cannot find workers who can add without machine, and the eatery is tired of losing money.

★★★

And in good old Kingston a firm has introduced the first computerized hairstyle design. That feature will give customers the opportunity to view themselves with various computer-generated hairstyles. I can see it now, an ad in *The Banner* and *Calvinist Contact*: Progressive, eight-fan-in-the-ceiling congregation seeks energetic, youthful pastor with computer-generated brush cut. Candidates must be willing to change their hairstyle according to the liturgical seasons."

I am off to get my remaining hairs computer styled.

Carl Tuyl is a member of the Ontario Provincial Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy and a chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Churches.

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Mines on the uncertain road to democracy in South Africa

South Africa is not finding the road to participatory democracy smooth, if one goes by recent developments. First there was the controversy about the secret funds through which the government supported groups that were sympathetic to it, such as the Inkatha. The predicament in which the government found itself was somewhat understandable if one realizes that such organizations as the ANC have in the past been freely funded by outside governments for the purpose of overthrowing the South African government.

Then there was the confession of a black security officer that special units had stirred up violence and had killed ANC supporters while posing as Inkatha supporters. This revelation, if true, confirms how right-wing elements in the security forces are going to make it difficult for de Klerk to achieve his aim of a peaceful transition to a democratic structure.

The latest incident which drew international attention was the August 9 riot in Ventersdorp, when white extremists tried to force their way into a hall where President F. W. de Klerk spoke to party faithfuls.

Who's playing with fire?

The news of this event was of special interest to me because I visited Ventersdorp last year with my friend Reinder Klein to interview Eugene Terre Blanche, the leader of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement (the Afrikaaner Weerstand Beweging or AWB). The AWB has its headquarters in Ventersdorp. The story of a riot there made me wonder why de Klerk had decided to venture into that stronghold of white supremacist Afrikaners.

In itself the fact that three whites and one black were killed is not all that remarkable. The real trouble apparently started when a minivan carrying a group of blacks went out of control and flipped on its back, killing one white demonstrator. This accident enraged the already enflamed crowd and resulted in the shooting and wounding of some of the black passengers and the eventual shooting between

rioters and police. The final count showed four people killed, three of them white. It was a protest that went sour through a number of unplanned events. But then, that is the nature of riots. Many riots in other countries have resulted in the deaths of bystanders.

The dangerous element in the event is the nature of fascism and the character of people embracing that political expression. Fascists are usually reactionary and angry people. President de Klerk may well hope that this episode will not take on historical significance in the right-wing Afrikaner consciousness.

A wild card

So far, the AWB has been fairly subdued in its opposition to what has been happening in South Africa. When I think back to the interview we had with Terre Blanche, I cannot help thinking that the man was more rhetoric than substance as he threatened a bloodbath and the death of thousands.

At the same time, people like him can and will stumble into acts of extremity when their backs are against the wall. Consider only the statement by Blanche in a television debate that his men carried guns and metal shields only to protect themselves.

With a paranoid mind like that leading one of the opposition groups, I wonder why President de Klerk provided the AWB with an occasion to feel challenged and cornered by speaking to a select audience in Ventersdorp. It'll be interesting to see whether de Klerk will accept Terre Blanche's invitation to return to this otherwise sleepy town to "normalize the situation in the white community" by addressing them. One needs a degree in psychology to figure out whether such an appearance will subdue or further inflame right-wing extremists. People like Terre Blanche have to be manipulated into reasonableness, and that is far more difficult and unpredictable than getting the ANC to the table.

BW

The truth demands sacrifice in Germany

According to an excellent opinion piece in the August 13 Toronto Star, written by German-born Natalie Fasolt, many German youth are faced with the unpleasant choice of sacrificing the truth or sacrificing their parents who have never come clean on their Nazi past. "Our parents were guilty not only of participating, passively or actively, in crimes against humanity, they carried the 'second guilt' of not having held accountable the major war criminals," she writes. "So our parents [in western Germany] resorted to 'shameless' behaviour, i.e., perfectionism, an obsession with work and an almost compulsive flight into acquisitiveness."

The author sees a strong connection between the chronic sense of fear and depression she finds in western Germany and the rising numbers of young Neo-Nazis in eastern Germany. She believes that the collective family secrets are coming back to haunt the children of the post-war generation. In eastern Germany "the same abusive structures that were the building blocks of Nazism were adapted to the Communist system, including those child-

rearing customs with a long history in German culture: blind obedience and the shaming and punishing of feelings that conflict with the system's values and demands."

In order to find their own integrity these children must give up their parents, writes Fasolt. However, many of them prefer to give up the truth instead and to repress unpleasant memories. Some of them are proposing that Buchenwald be abolished as a Holocaust memorial.

Reflecting on this article I was reminded of the age-old human tendency to which the Apostle Paul refers in Romans 1: that of suppressing the truth, which God keeps on revealing and making plain, by making one's thinking futile and one's foolish heart darker. It happens in the collective memory of a nation and it happens in the individual lives of families and persons. Wherever there has been abuse or wickedness, one is often faced with the choice of sacrificing relationships in order to find personal and collective integrity or the choice of suppressing the truth and joining others in their hopeless captivity to sin and guilt.

BW

Letters

Coalition of Regions is not anti-French

In *Calvinist Contact*, July 26, appeared an article under the title "Troubled times facing Canada's Christian Heritage Party." The first paragraph on page 2 states that the C.O.R. party (Coalition of Regions) is seen as being motivated by anti-French sentiment.

We [would] like to point out [that] this [is] incorrect. We are not sentimental! It is the tax dollar that counts; and we [would] like to state it clearly.

Except for the province of Quebec, we promote English to be the one official language for Canada. What we oppose is the funding with taxpayers' money of the promotion of French, German, Italian, Chinese, Spanish, you-name-it language. This is, in fact, different [than] what you write.

Now further: if and when Quebec wants to be independent we will not force it to remain part of Canada. We wish them well and propose to trade with the state of Quebec [on] the very same [basis which] we trade with any other country. You do not notice any anti-French sentiment here.

We do not think of reprisals. We are not a Christian party like the Christian Heritage Party but we are a democratic party. Christian teaching can have a place in public schools if parents of various denominations and school boards work together within provincial guidelines. We favour a return to real democracy. What we have now is a dictatorship [by the] minority.

Gerrit van Laar
Cobalt, Ont.

Greetings from Down Under

For many years now we have had the opportunity to read *Calvinist Contact*, receiving it regularly by mail. We share it with others, and on the whole, we enjoy most of the articles, especially the press comments by Carl Tuyl and "Peter and Marja are IN."

You will appreciate that living in Australia we do not relate to some of the local content, so obviously we go for the more general subjects — but overall,

finding something for everyone, we are happy to subscribe again for another year.

The names we see from time to time are similar to those here and remind us of our common background — maybe related a few generations ago. So, greetings to all kinspeople.

Steve Posthumus
Devonport, Tasmania

President appreciates critical comment

I have just read the article and editorial regarding Redeemer College in your issue of August 16, 1991.

You suggest in your editorial that the administration was tempted to rely on its own understanding and to "wander from the path of faith, prayer and acts of integrity into the unholy way of impatience and an 'I'll fix it myself' kind of mentality." I appreciate the fact that you pointed this out.

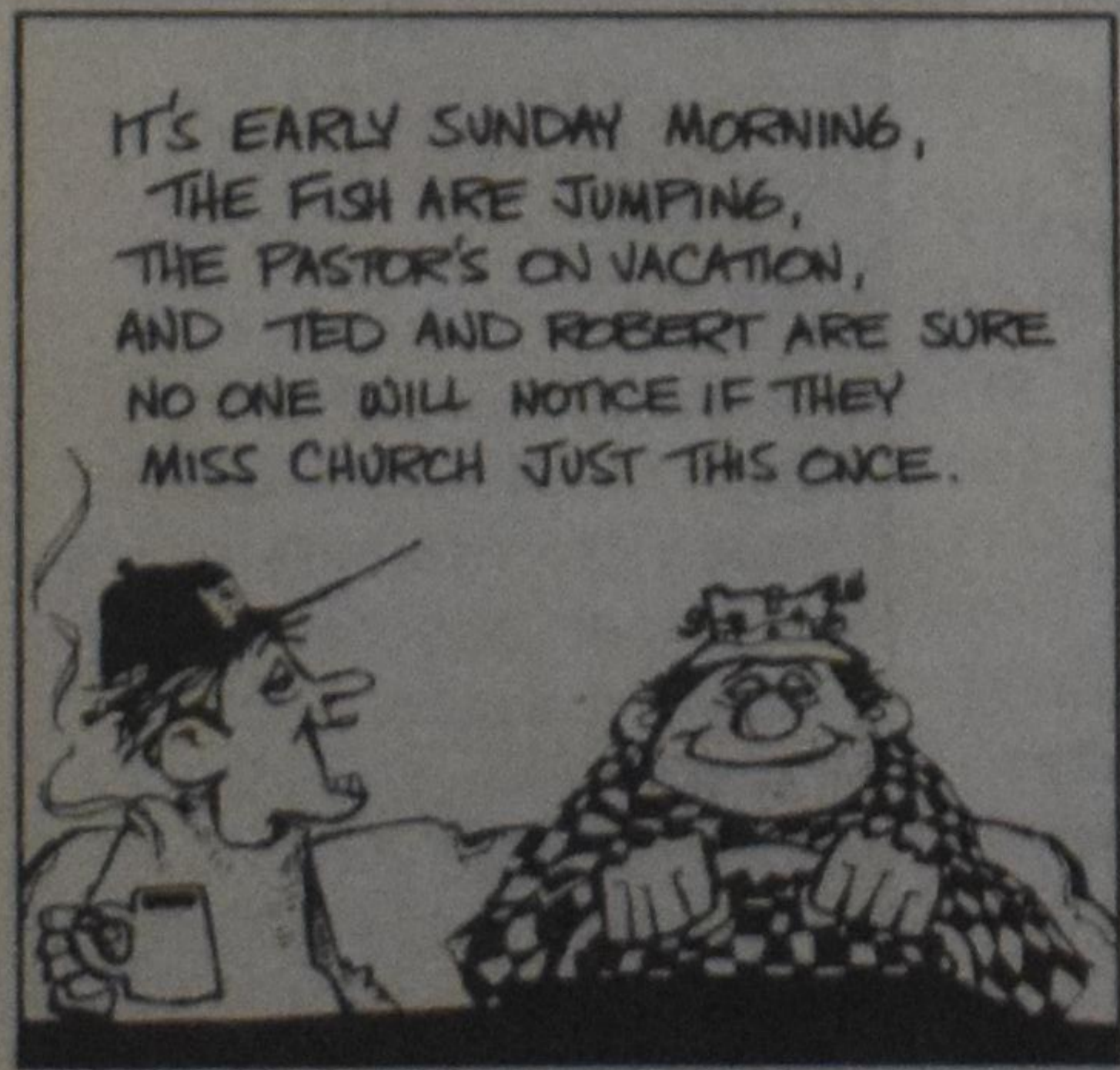
Your concern has reaffirmed for us the awareness that we ought to be totally dependent on God. As Christians the

challenge of our lives is to listen carefully to God's guiding voice, and to place our trust completely in him. I, and those with me, have wrestled with that challenge and through this have gained new insight into what it means to be dependent on the Lord.

A young college demands tremendous sacrifices from its constituency and from its faculty and staff. We have just gone through a most difficult summer. It is my fervent prayer that, in spite of our shortcomings, the Lord will continue to bless the work of Christian higher learning to which we have been called.

Henry R. De Bolster
President
Redeemer College
Ancaster, Ont.

BEYOND BELIEF



Marian den Boer

Like the Lilies



Sin and anger

"In your anger do not sin" (Ephesians 4:26).

It's Thursday, 3:30 p.m. From my sick bed I hear the school kids jubilantly parade into the house. It sounds like they each have a case of chocolate bars — those big almond bars that go for \$2 each.

I have been warned. An ominous letter about student funds and school trips appeared several weeks ago. But there was an escape clause in the letter. It said if you don't wish to participate, feel free (or was it obliged?) to contribute in another way.

Congenial person that I am, I usually endure these fundraisers with a groan and a grin. I am also usually healthy and a fairly able trouble-shooter.

Today I am too sick to think much about three children (two of them under the age of 12) each armed with \$24 worth of chocolate. Besides, the family seems to be getting on quite well without much participation from me. I've been bed-ridden with bronchitis for more than a week. The medicine the doctor gave me doesn't seem to be working. I'm developing an itchy rash and I can't keep food down. My life is too miserable to think about chocolate.

Alarm systems down

Under ordinary circumstances, bells would be going off in my head. I would be disarming the children at the door with a kiss and a list of chocolate-selling campaign rules. Today I don't sense danger, not even when I find out Friday is a professional activity day (that means no school).

Friday morning before he leaves for work my husband, Marty, instructs the children to be very good — which they are as they munch on chocolate bars in their rooms.

I don't acknowledge, "Here's two more dollars!" "Did you buy another one?" and "Munch, munch" as warning signals. My trouble-shooting ability has abandoned me completely.

By Friday evening I'm sick of being sick. Even though I am still feverish, nauseous, itchy and achy, the supper-making noises downstairs have me feeling left-out. I long to be part of the functioning household again. Maybe I'll just get out of bed and make an appearance. As I shuffle along the upstairs hall, something oozes into the soles of my warm bare feet. I check under my left foot ... it's chocolate; little bits of brown chocolate.

I get down on my hands and knees. The floor is covered with chocolate crumbs. I attempt to pick them up but there are too many.

It's everywhere

I check the kids' rooms. The floors and the dressers are sprinkled with chocolate bits and discarded wrappers. In one room, the quilt on the bed is smeared with chocolate. That does it. I pick up that quilt. I march downstairs, drop the quilt in the middle of the kitchen floor and scream, "There's chocolate everywhere!" The happy supper-time chatter stops as 10 eyes stare at me and five mouths fall open.

I march back upstairs, pick up several empty wrappers and march back down. I throw them on the kitchen floor.

I march back up once more, pick up the half-empty boxes of bars with the money hanging out of the envelopes. I bring them into the kitchen and narrowly avoid slamming them into a thousand crumbs as I hoarsely scream out against chocolate bar fundraisers. "It's a fine way to raise money. Sell chocolate to yourself."

I yank out the vacuum cleaner. By now the children are in tears. Marty looks at me and cautions, "You'll kill yourself."

I ignore him and march back upstairs with the vacuum to suck up the offending chocolate crumbs. By the time I finish vacuuming, my anger is spent. Did I sin?

Marian den Boer is a free-lance writer who lives in Hamilton, Ont.

News

Experiences in dislocation: The Christian community in Pakistan

Charles Amjad-Ali

There are some 3.5 million Christians in Islam-dominated Pakistan, most of whom live within the rural setting of isolated Christian villages or in largely segregated slums. The Christian community has its basic origin in conversions from lower caste Hindus some 150 years ago, by individuals who hoped that through Christianity they would achieve material fulfilment and advancement. Ironically, Hindu stratification has continued to be practised against Christians even though Islam rejects these prejudices.

Not only do Christians remain socially, economically and culturally marginalized,

but increasing demands for greater Islamization have also eroded their political status.

Pakistan was the first contemporary nation which defined itself in terms of religion as it came out of the colonial period. In this context, Pakistan has struggled to find the right combination between Islam and modern political structures.

Political background

The roots of the *sharia* bill date back to the 1977 military coup of Gen. Zia-ul Haq and his suspension of the Constitution of 1973. Not fulfilling his promise to hold elections within 90 days of coming into power, he legitimized his

continuing role through the Islamization process by saying that Islam did not endorse democracy or party politics.

Faced with continuing popular pressure for the restoration of democracy, Zia held non-party elections in February 1985 and partially revived the 1973 Constitution the following month, having amended it in a one-person legislative act. Zia then forcefully indemnified all his acts as martial law ruler by means of the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution.

This did not bode well for minority groups, as the eighth amendment also legitimized separate elections for minorities and incorporated the objectives resolution in the main text of the Constitution. That resolution, among other things, establishes the Koran and the Sunna as the foundation for legislation in Pakistan. On the basis of the objectives resolution, two very conservative Muslim senators introduced a *sharia* bill into the Senate in July 1985, seeking to make *sharia* the law of the land. The bill, and a similar one called the ninth amendment to the Constitution were rejected by the senate while Zia was still in power.

When the elected government of Benazir Bhutto came to power the *sharia* issue was raised again in order to embarrass her government. Accused by conservative Muslim groups of being secular and the leadership of a woman in an Islamic state under question, she was unable to manoeuvre issues always to her liking. The Ziaist-controlled senate passed the *sharia* bill on May 13, 1990.

To its credit the Bhutto government, in its 20 months in power, took positive steps regarding minority issues to offset the ordinances of Islamization, which were the daily diet of the previous dictatorship. The emphasis on Islam was eliminated on a national level; a Catholic priest was appointed minister of the newly established Ministry of Minority Affairs; and a Zoroastrian became senior adviser to the prime minister. Bhutto also pushed for the appointment of Chief Justice

Dorab Patel, a Zoroastrian and the head of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, for a seat at the International Court of Justice at the Hague.

However, there was an erosion — following the dismissal of the Bhutto government — when the IJI Party came to power promising to bring in a *sharia* bill. In this version of the bill, passed by the national assembly in May, there were substantial modifications made protecting minorities.

Coercion

Besides the fact that the current Constitution represents a great deterioration in the rights of minorities, there is also a contradictory message as to whether the Koran and Sunna or the Constitution of Pakistan is to be supreme. The *sharia* act was enacted to placate the mullahs but they will never be satisfied with this document. They will keep pushing until the rights of all citizens are subjugated to a group of people who have never been able to get legislative power through electoral means, but have been able to coerce people through the emotional attachment to religion.

They are fundamentally against not only the minorities, but all Muslims who believe in finding a political order where plurality of beliefs is accepted and where religious identity does not impede citizenship.

Threatened by slightest challenge

The mullahs want to undo some of the principles behind the founding of Pakistan, in which a homeland for India's Muslim minority was not meant to be an Islamic state. In a sense the whole Islamization process reflects that even after 44 years, and with an overwhelming majority of 93 per cent, Pakistan's Muslims still operate from a social-psychology of an oppressed minority threatened by the slightest challenge to its interpretation of Islam.

Christians have been further dislocated, this time politically through Islamization and the recent passage of the *sharia* bill. They must continue to

struggle against these processes not just for the protection of their own rights but for those of all citizens. If they struggle only for their own individual rights, then they will just be set aside having no status at all.

Dr. Charles Amjad-Ali is director of the Christian Study Centre in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

News digest

TORONTO, Ont.

(*Toronto Star*) — The Canadian Medical Association failed to adopt a position on when a fetus becomes a human being at an annual meeting of its council this month. The ethics committee, chaired by Dr. Noel Doig, of Saskatoon, presented a paper that argued the fetus becomes a person, with all the rights of any person, when it has developed the potential for brain activity. That occurs at approximately 20 weeks and can be determined by brain-wave patterns, Doig argued. He told the council that the present situation in which the fetus has no legal status is "unsatisfactory" and urged the council to adopt the committee's position with the hope of influencing forthcoming legislation. The association put aside the paper and called for further study.

VANCOUVER, B.C.

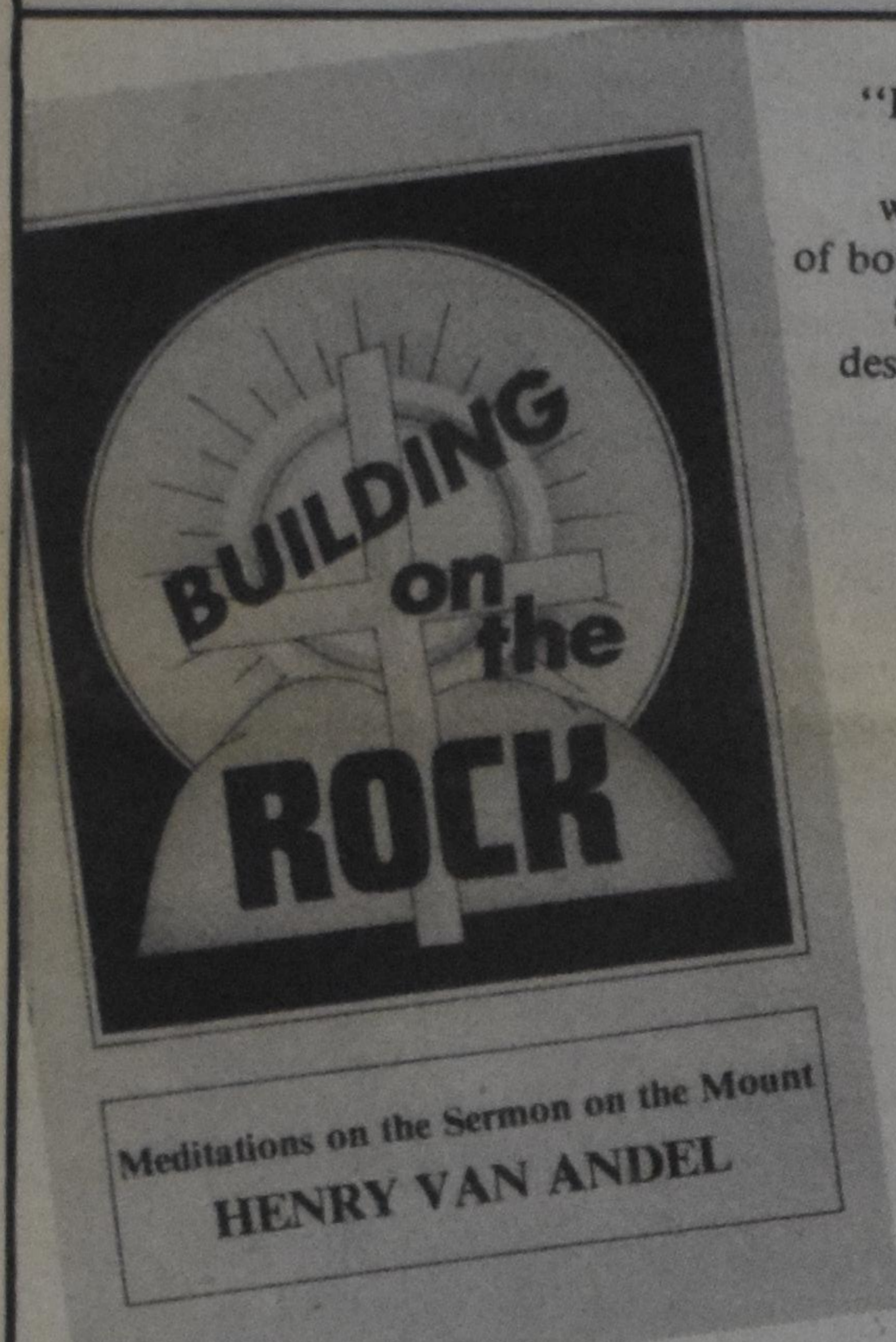
(*Canadian Scene*) — Munich's National Museum of Ethnology, with the help of a Vancouver art dealer, is another step closer to completing its extensive collection on Canadian Native art and culture. "Project Totem Pole," a joint undertaking by the Munich museum and Artex Sales, a Vancouver art firm, has commissioned Haida woodcarver Reg Davidson to create a six-metre high replica of a famous 19th century Haida totem pole for the museum's collection. The date for completion of the project has been set at early October of this year.

TORONTO, Ont. (U.S. Consulate General) — Recent changes in U.S. immigration law mean citizens of the Netherlands, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom citizens with right of abode in the U.K. no longer require a visa to enter the U.S. by land. Citizens of these countries can contact U.S. immigration for further information.

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Cinema/Music

Music review

I've Never Been Old Before: 16 New Songs About Aging

Marian Van Til

Performed on the banjo, harmonica and guitar by Bob Payton. Available on cassette tape for \$12 (U.S.) plus \$2 shipping and handling from

Bob Payton, P.O. Box 7480, Minneapolis, MN 55407.

Bob Payton has a unique thing going. Having a masters degree in therapeutic

recreation and being a professional musician (and a former activities co-ordinator in a nursing home), he decided to combine those career facets into one package. So he travels across North America presenting concert performances and educational workshops on aging.

Payton's concerts (and this current recording) are what he calls "a musical celebration of aging." The workshops explore old age through songs, poems, anecdotes and informal discussion, all of which conclude that the latter years of one's life are or should be a "meaningful and productive experience" — an important message in a secular society obsessed with youth and afraid of the signs of growing old.

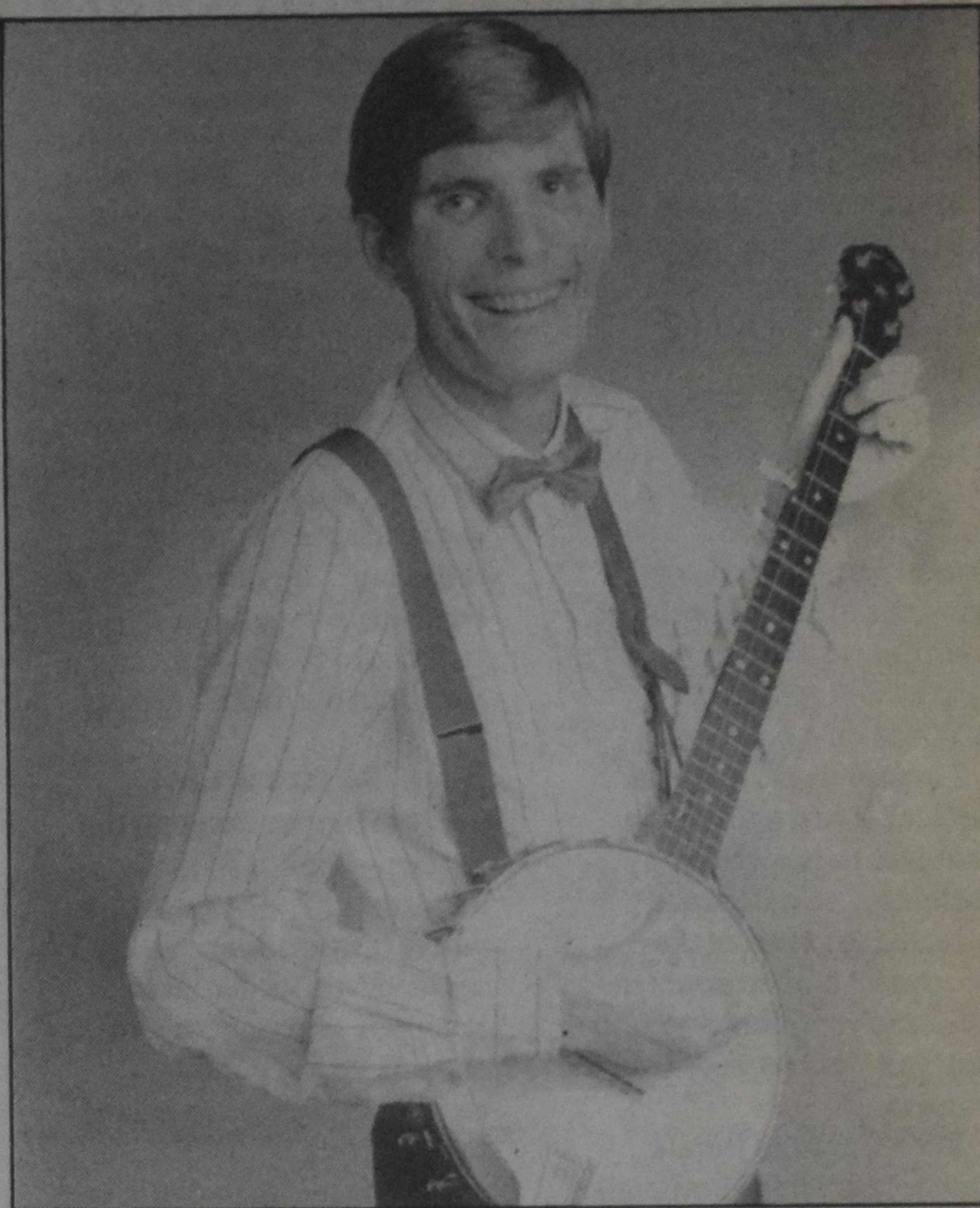
Payton's live audiences are groups such as nursing home staffs and residents, senior citizens centres and retirement communities, professional conferences on aging, hospital staff and support groups, inter-generational school programs and church groups. His songs can easily be appreciated by people of a variety of ages and he hopes his audiences will include such a spectrum of ages, particularly because he believes "that our attitudes toward growing old begin forming while we are young and continue to develop throughout our lives."

Unadorned folk style

This is hand-clappin', often foot-stompin' and sometimes humorous stuff. It's not gussied up: it's energetic but unadorned folk-style singing with acoustic accompaniment. If you're used to synthesizer, electric instruments, background vocals, tracks dubbed over each other and lots of reverberation, this straightforward music may require some getting used to. Payton tries to vary the tempos and meters but there's still too much "sameness" about them when listening to the recording in one sitting.

A name used in vain?

CARDIFF, Calif. (EP) — The name of the Lord is appearing with greater frequency on the pop charts, but it's got nothing to do with Christian artists crossing over to pop. Instead, notes *Media Update* newsletter from Al Menconi Ministries, secular rock groups have begun taking religious-sounding names, including "Jesus and Mary Chain," "Liquid Jesus," "Jesus Jones," "Jesus Lizard," "MC 900 Foot Jesus," and Boy George's new Krishna-oriented band, "Jesus Loves you." There's even a singer in the punk band "Day Glo Abortions" who calls himself "Jesus Bonehead." The



Bob Payton: A musical celebration of aging.

The lyrics here cover such things as cultural attitudes towards aging, physical changes, family relationships, love in later life, retirement, reminiscing, emotional health in old age, and death.

The first track on Side 1 starts out with "What the Old Folks Know." Its refrain says: *If we just knew what the old folks knew/ We'd have a better time of it as on our way we'd go. / They've already harvested the very field that we're about to hoe. / If we just knew what the old folks know.*

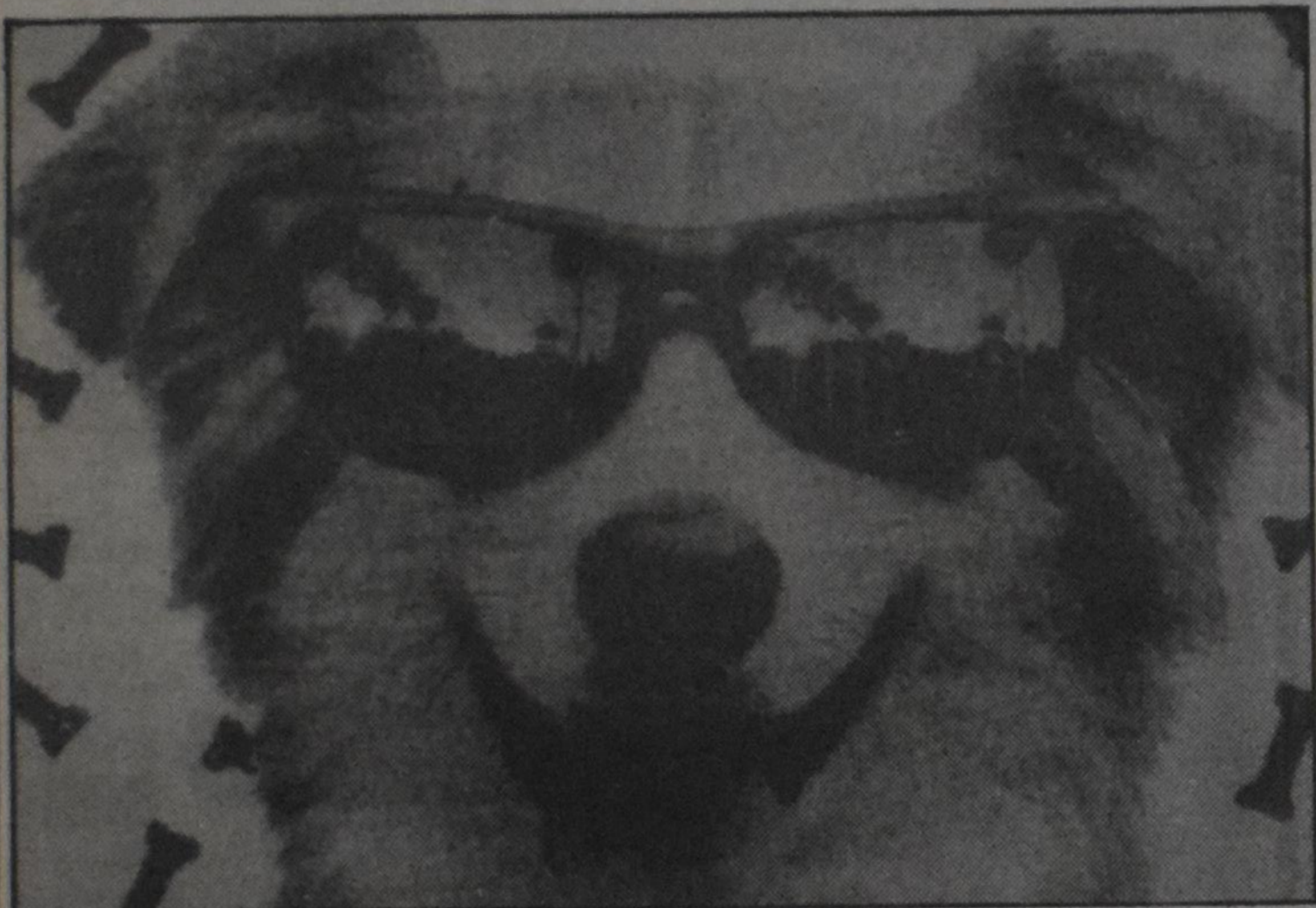
In "Nature's Way" older folks are advised not to try to hide wrinkles and grey hair but to graciously accept the physical signs of aging. The refrain asserts: *It's nature's way of sayin', / With wrinkles and with grayin', / There's more to life than flesh and bones/ And why should I disguise/ The wisdom of the ages, / The treasures of the sages, / The mystery of life unfolding right before my eyes?*

"Grandma and Grandpa" takes a sympathetic look at a middle-aged couple who become grandparents for the first time. "The Goodnight Kiss" poignantly gives recognition to a nurse's aid who helps a nursing home resident grieve after the loss of her husband. In a similar vein, "Sing Me a Song, Mr. Bloom" expresses the joy brought to a nursing home resident by a volunteer visitor.

There is much that is positive about these songs and about Payton's effort to get people to learn from the wisdom of the elderly and to avoid isolating them from the younger strata of society. Despite that, any Christian listener will find a gaping hole here: there's no acknowledgement of Providence or reliance on God to guide one into old age; there's no solid faith which allows the elderly (and all of us) to face aging and death unafraid. Needless to say, that's a crucial omission.

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til



Bingo

Rated Family

Stars "Bingo," Cindy Williams, David Rasche, Robert J. Steinmiller, Jr.

Directed by Matthew Robbins

Bingo, a Heinz-57 mutt who was literally rescued from the dog pound to star in this film, is one smart dog. (And handsome too, despite his questionable pedigree.) But he wasn't smart enough to stay away from this movie — understandable, I guess, when death or starring in a lousy movie are your only options.

This *could* have been top-notch family entertainment: a poignant story about the unbreakable bond that develops between a lonely, misunderstood boy and a stray dog who needs a friend as much as the boy does.

Instead, while the film has one or two touching moments, it tries so self-consciously to be "with-it" that its attempts at trendiness and cuteness prevent it from expressing positive values or much real emotion.

The boy is likeable most of the time (though he's capable of some not-so-nice language and has some uncouth habits); his older brother is an obnoxious smart aleck; their father, who plays football for the Denver Broncos, is a whining, emotional adolescent who thinks the world revolves around him and who resents his younger son for taking attention away from him; the mother and wife seems to have one foot on the ground and one on another planet.

The younger boy and his love for animals seems to be merely tolerated and he's the butt of all the family jokes. In reality, he's the only halfway decent human being in the lot, though periodically the mother makes a fairly good showing.

When Bingo and the boy get hooked up, Bingo must stay hidden, for obvious reasons. When the family moves to Green Bay so Dad can play with the Packers, the dog gets left behind and must sniff his way from Colorado to Wisconsin. Needless to say, Bingo has numerous adventures along the way, is thwarted by various nasty people and forces, and eventually is reunited — this time permanently — with the boy.

Besides the nastiness between family members, what is so irritating about this story is its inane treatment of a wonderful dog. As I said, Bingo is smart (smarter than anybody who made this movie). But he isn't allowed to do just normal, well-trained dog stuff. He's made to run around acting like a human being in dog's clothing: he looks up addresses in the phone book; he brings wine to a romantic tryst with the comely cocker spaniel next door; he does time in a state prison; he washes dishes, etc., etc. But the doggies-are-just-like-people jokes wear thin almost immediately.

It's hard to imagine what the filmmakers were thinking when they cooked up this gem. If you appreciate well-crafted dog and boy stories my advice would be to stay home and watch *Lassie* reruns.

magazine notes, "Just because Jesus is the name above all names doesn't mean the world

isn't still trying to bring him down to their level and walk all over him."

Clearly a problem

TUPELO, Miss. (EP) — Despite the thousands of letters of protest from participants in a boycott led by Christian Leaders for Responsible Television (CLEAR-TV), spokespersons for the S.C. Johnson and Pfizer companies say they won't change the way they buy television time. CLEAR-TV, a coalition of about 1,600 Christian leaders, is urging a boycott of S.C.

Johnson (makers of Johnson Wax products), and Pfizer (maker of Barbasol shaving cream, Ben Gay rub, etc.). The group claims the companies advertise on television programs which prominently feature sex, violence and profanity. Pfizer has reportedly received between 13,000 and 15,000 pieces of boycott-related mail.

World's farthest flung prayer meeting to cast 'prayer net' over world

AMSTERDAM, (EP) — The world's farthest-flung prayer meeting will take place Sept. 21 when Christians will gather at all four corners of the earth to pray for world evangelization.

Hundreds will make their ways to the furthestmost points of the world's major land masses to "surround" the globe with prayers for the evangelization of all peoples, according to a report from Youth With A Mission (YWAM) in Amsterdam.

Thousands more with a similar pioneer spirit but unable to take such far-reaching actual steps are expected to gather at the "corners" of their countries, cities and community to join in casting a "prayer net" over the entire earth.

The "Cardinal Points Prayer Day" is the brainchild of Youth With A Mission founder and president Loren Cunningham, who believes that concerted intercession could play a part in seeing millions becoming Christians during this decade of evangelism.

"First we want to thank the Lord for the provision of salvation through Christ on the cross, for the millions he has saved through the centuries, in our generation and especially in the last decade," explained Cunningham, who plans to join those gathering at Cape Piau, Malaysia, the southernmost of Asia.

"Secondly we will have times of praise for who God is in his greatness over the universe and over this speck called earth and over each one of the people on this earth," he added. "We are believing for multiplied millions to be won into his Kingdom during this decade."

Sunrise to sunset

From sunrise to sunset the groups — Youth With A Mission staff, along with workers from other mission agencies and local church members who want to join in — will link up in a period of combined prayer, praise and thanksgiving.

Putting feet to the surround-the-world prayer project since it was announced has been the responsibility of Australian Roger McKnight, who says that the idea has captured the imagination of many people.

"I have been amazed at the enthusiasm," McKnight said. "It really seems to have struck a chord in people. These extreme points express the fulfilment of the Great Commission going to the ends of the earth."

"I think it appeals to the heart of our mission. By actually taking physical steps, we are demonstrating not only to ourselves but also to God that we want our prayers to be heard in heaven! I also think that being involved in this will cultivate in people a new level of faith in what God can do. It is like casting a spiritual fishing net over the nations."

Together with a geographer, McKnight and his team have been busy researching the logistical and geographical obstacles in seeing people make their way to each of the extremities.

That means securing the use of four-wheeled drive vehicles to reach Steep Point, a remote spot on the Western Australian coastline, and finding horses to carry the Chilean contingent out to windswept Cape Froward, out on the largely barren Brunswick peninsula.

Among the other prayer points is snow-covered Cape Dezhneva, looking out across the Bering Sea towards Alaska from the Soviet Union's easternmost mainland and only recently opened to visitors even from within the USSR.

Sverdlovsk, close to the Ural Mountains, is one of two "internal extremities" — the other being the Central American border between Panama and Colombia — chosen to represent a major cultural and historical division between two main regions of the world.

September was chosen for the prayer day since it is most likely to provide the most favourable climate at all sites, but even so it will mean wrapping up warmly for those heading to places like Cape Dezhneva — where temperatures could be well below freezing.

During their prayer meetings, each group will make a record of the topics they cover and Bible passages they believe are significant to help compile a global record of the day.

For McKnight, a former mechanical engineer who has served with YWAM for over a decade, the event also offers an opportunity for a worldwide demonstration of unity among Christians.

Responding to the Great Commission

"We would like as many people from the Body of Christ as possible to join with us, from churches and other mission groups. This is not intended to be a YWAM thing by any means. It has the potential to be a wonderful way of expressing solidarity in responding to the Great Commission," he commented. "We are interested in the fact that 1.3 billion people are completely unreached by the Gospel, and we feel that our role is to draw the attention of the Body of Christ to the needs and the opportunities."

"We believe that there is tremendous potential in getting so many people together to pray at the same time in this way," he said. "As far as we are aware this has never been done in history before."

He added, "Jesus commands us to go to the uttermost parts of the earth, but the Bible also speaks a lot in the Old Testament about the corners of the earth, the ends of the earth; there is a significance there. So there is a symbolism and a reality in going to these places. It is taking literally and with a fairly simplistic kind of faith the command to go to the ends of the earth for Jesus."

He concluded, "The Bible also talks of the ends of the earth as being God's inheritance. We want to be part of hastening that inheritance for him."

Independent Lutherans adopt major statement on Scripture, plan to open new seminary

ST. PAUL, Minn. (EP) — Delegates from across the U.S. who attended the fourth annual convention of the fledgling American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC) decided, among other things, to open a new seminary somewhere in the Midwest at some time within the next two years. Possible sites for the new institution include the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

The AALC was formed about four years ago, shortly before the Lutheran merger which created the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was finalized. Members of the AALC chose not to join the merger because "we chose rather to go the way that Martin Luther laid out for us — the infallibility and inerrancy of the Scriptures as the only norm for life," explained Gene Quist, administrative co-ordinator of the association and co-ordinator of this year's convention.

In keeping with that stance, AALC churches adopted "a major statement on the authority of Scripture" at the convention. The statement declares that "Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven," that "the primary mission of the church is to make disciples of every nation," and that "all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit and that God is therefore the true Author of every word of Scripture." The statement is identical to a statement adopted by The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 1973.

"This document spells out exactly what we mean when we say the Bible is God's inerrant, infallible Word," explained the Rev. Thomas Aadland, Secretary of the AALC. "We looked very carefully at Missouri's statement. We are one in mind and spirit on this important issue. This is a point of fundamental agreement among all conservative, confessional Lutheran bodies."

The AALC is comprised of about 90 churches representing states on both coasts and in the midwest. The national headquarters is in Minneapolis.

"We have right now about 16 seminary students in various seminaries around the country," Quist added. "We're shepherding them through an agency we call 'a Lutheran house of studies.' We have a director on the west coast and another in the midwest. But we feel we'll have enough people in a couple of years that we could pull them into one place."

Delegates to the convention in St. Paul, June 19-22, elected Dr. Norman Lund as President of the as yet unnamed seminary. "It's a seminary in process," Quist said. Lund has been serving as the dean of students at the California Lutheran Bible Institute. The seminary is to open by the fall of 1993, and Lund is to begin serving in January of 1992.

Apology better late than never

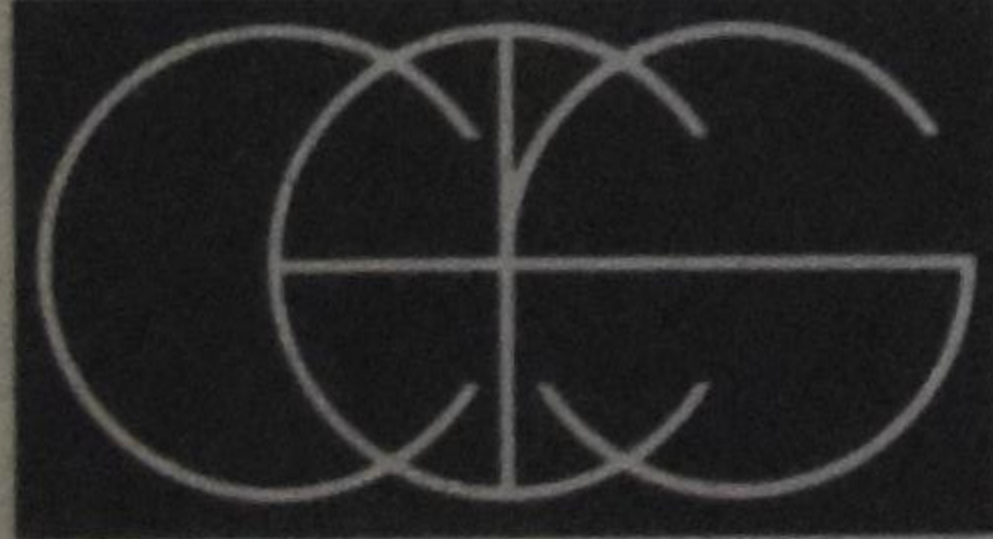
EVANSTON, Ill. (EP) — Healing has begun in a church split that happened 120 years ago. In 1870, racial discrimination caused a half-dozen black worshippers to leave First Baptist in Evanston, Illinois, and start Second Baptist.

Though the exact reasons aren't known, it's believed that blacks were allowed to be members of First Baptist but had no voice in running the church and were required to sit in the balcony. Last winter, First Baptist presented a resolution to Second Baptist seeking the black church's forgiveness.

On June 2, both congregations walked the few blocks between the churches to hear sermons. The churches will remain separate — the white First Baptist with its 300 members, and the black Second Baptist with about 3,000 — but further joint projects are planned.

Dobson moves to where it's cheaper

POMONA, Calif. (EP) — Dr. James Dobson's Focus on the Family ministry is moving its headquarters to Colorado Springs, Colorado, the ministry announced. In a May letter to supporters, Dobson said he expected the ministry to move in late summer or early fall. Cost of living was a major factor in the decision to relocate; living expenses are 29 per cent lower in Colorado Springs than in southern California, with property costs being a major factor.



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First Protestant church planted in Albania

Ron MacMillan
TIRANA, Albania (NNI) — Albania's first Protestant church has been established in Tirana, Albania, following the conversion to Christianity of 173 Albanians during a week-long evangelistic campaign mounted by 10 international missions during the first week of July.
Entitled "The Albanian Encouragement Project," over 100 evangelists from Western-based ministries, including International Teams, Operation Mobilization, Open Doors, and Youth With a Mission, combed the streets of Tirana distributing 7,000 New Testaments and 25,000 Gospels of John. Evening evangelistic rallies were held in a football stadium loaned to organizers by the Albanian Government.
The week-long outreach

culminated with a moving lakeside baptism ceremony. Of the new converts, 43 opted to be baptized, most of whom were young men. Two Bible teachers fluent in Albanian have remained in Tirana to minister to the new believers.
About-face
The unprecedented campaign was conceived and organized within a month in response to Albania's sudden openness. Less than 18 months ago Albania claimed to be "the world's most atheistic state." Ironically, it was the communist minister of health, Zabit Brojak, who initially gave the nod to the evangelical agencies; further governmental support came from the minister of culture, Preg Zogai, who officially opened the evening rallies with the words,

"Albania needs to restore her spiritual equilibrium."
Barth Companjen, director of Ancient World Outreach and main co-ordinator of the week-long campaign, described Albania as "Europe's least evangelized country and the most open — a unique combination." He added, "It's also the European nation with the largest Muslim population — three great reasons to make this place an evangelistic priority."
Before the Second World War, Albania's population generally broke down into 70 per cent Muslim, 20 per cent Orthodox and 10 per cent Roman Catholic, with a small community of Protestants in Korce numbering no more than 200 at most. But in 1967, communist dictator Enver Hoxha outlawed all profession

of religion, which was not relaxed until 1990, fully five years after his death.
Curiosity about religion
Since then two Catholic churches, one Orthodox church and one mosque have reopened in Tirana and these usually draw crowds of several hundred. But it is too early to say whether the Albanians will turn back to their traditional churches and religions.
What is certain is that they are all extremely curious about religion, especially the youth,

who have never had any knowledge or concept of God. But this curiosity isn't discriminating, according to Companjen: "After the isolation under Hoxha, the people are in a hurry to embrace every belief and will give the same smile to Bahais, Mormons, New Agers and Christians."
He added, "This is why we took our chance to mount the campaign so quickly; now is the time the spiritual vacuum of the Albanian people is at its most [vacuous], but next year it may be very different."

Tensions continue for church in Vietnam: Crackdown linked to new communist leader

Andrew Wark
HONG KONG (NNI) — House church leaders in southern Vietnam are linking the continuing government crackdown against the Christian community there to the appointment of Communist Party General Secretary Do Muoi, 74, in late June.
Speaking to a reliable source who recently visited Vietnam, Christian leaders from several different Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) house churches alleged that the former Prime Minister of Vietnam had previously been quoted as saying he "hated all religion — especially the house church groups."
They further alleged that Muoi had once complained publicly about the unregistered Christian movements, asking why they could not join the "official" church.
Muoi was appointed to the position of general secretary during the recent Vietnamese Communist Party's national congress in Hanoi. Although foreign diplomats claim that since 1986 he has made a transition from a strict socialist stance to a more reform-minded platform, Muoi is a veteran revolutionary with a reputation for being a strict party disciplinarian. He continues to be treated with a degree of suspicion in the south for his key role in abolishing capitalism in the mid-1970s.
However, according to a senior member of U.S.-based Vietnam Ministries, Dr. Phu Xuan Ho, Muoi's appointment to the position of general secretary is still too recent to determine conclusively whether or not he is responsible for the current crackdown or that a more prohibitive religious policy has been adopted by the party since he took office.
Several key house church

leaders have been placed under administrative arrest since late February, over their alleged "illegal" activities. These include Rev. Dinh Thien Tu, leader of one of the largest house church movements in Ho Chi Minh City, and Pastor Tran Dinh Ai. After their arrests, many other unregistered Protestant pastors were asked to report to local authorities and detained in prison for periods ranging from one week to two months.
According to the source, who asked not to be named, most of those interrogated have been told to report back to police authorities once a month for further questioning.
Undaunted
While tension in southern Vietnamese house churches remains high, recent reports indicate significant church growth since the arrests began. One Ho Chi Minh City unregistered church movement is reportedly growing at a rate of 300 new converts per month, and is responsible for training 400 Christian workers so far this year. Leaders of the movement told an NNI source they have established 25 places of worship throughout southern Vietnam, with a total membership of around 5,000 Christians.
Vietnam's unregistered house church movement is relatively new, breaking away from the established, high-profile ECVN in 1989 over doctrinal disputes. The ECVN is an official association of all government recognized churches, many of which were formerly affiliated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

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Word
and
Spirit



Andrew Kuyvenhoven

How do the wise build their houses?

A child knows the answer to this parable embodied in a Sunday school song: the foolish man built his house on the sand but the wise man built his house on the rock. When the rains came down and the floods came up the house of the foolish man came tumbling down with a bang. But the house on the rock stood firm.
And what is the "rock" in the story? We teach our children that the rock is Jesus. "So build your house on the Lord Jesus Christ and the blessings will come down when the prayers go up."
It's a good song. All children should know it. However, the last stanza about the rock being Jesus gives a different twist to Jesus' own story.
In Jesus' parable (Matt. 7:24-27 and Luke 6:47-49) the person who listens to Jesus' teaching but does not obey him is as foolish as someone who builds a house on sand. And the person who not only hears what Jesus says but also obeys his commands is like a wise builder who lays the foundation on the rocks. To hear without doing is foolish — as foolish as building a house without a foundation. Only those who listen and obey have a future.
Unattainable?
The parable of the wise and the foolish builder forms the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7), the most discussed sermon of all times. The radical love command of the Sermon on the Mount was the reason why Nietzsche rejected Christianity, but Tolstoi and Gandhi found true Christianity only in this sermon. And within the Christian church we are forever trying to find reasons why God cannot expect us ordinary Christians to live by the ethics of this sermon.
Some theologians say that the Sermon on the Mount is not intended for the present world but for the coming kingdom. Others say that the sermon is actually a polemic against the Pharisees (showing that no one can keep the law) or that it is an ethic for the end times only:

the rules cannot apply in a society that needs a lasting order. Still others have said that the rules of the Sermon on the Mount hold only for Christians who have a special calling to leave ordinary life in this world and to strive for perfection. And Luther said that the rules hold for our private lives but not for our public actions.
'Experiment of love'
No doubt the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount is a subject worth discussing. It is certainly not a law for the world. The swine would trample the pearls (7:6). But it is a word addressed to the disciples of Jesus. They must love as their Father in heaven loves. And they must live their whole lives on earth devoted to this "experiment of love."
We may have all sorts of reactions and theories about the workability of the Sermon. But Jesus says that there are only two reactions: "Either you hear my words and you put them into practice, or you listen to my sermon and you don't do what I say. If you practise what I preach you are wise. If you like listening to my sermon but you don't do what I say, you are a fool — as foolish as a person who builds a house for destruction."
It's all right to teach children to "build their house on the Lord Jesus Christ." That, too, is a figure of speech which occurs in the Bible (1 Cor. 3:11). But it takes the edge off the parable of the wise and foolish builders.
That parable says: the words of Jesus are heard by two kinds of listeners. Some hear and do. They are wise. Others say that it was a beautiful sermon. And then they drink their coffee. That's all.
They are the fools who will not stand in the hour of judgment.

Andrew Kuyvenhoven is the pastor of Bethel Christian Reformed Church, Waterdown, Ont.

Short Story

Lord's Day One

Annita Maat

Sonya's pen followed the outline of the dark blue peace sign already indented in the varnished plywood of the table. She tossed her thick blonde hair back over the shoulders of her bulky red sweater. She had natural curls which, left untended, ballooned into a frizzled mass. Every night she laboured, rolling her hair in giant prickly-wired mesh tubes. Then she slept, uncomfortably, on that apparatus. Every morning, she combed her hair out, luxuriant and straight. Long-haired folksinger Joan Baez was her model. Martin Luther King, brave architect of new worlds, her hero.

The other kids said little as they slouched in. Mostly, they grunted a casual "hi" and chose the furthest seats available, slumping into them with uninvolved ease. One or two turned the chair around and, straddling it, leaned elbows on the backrest to talk with a close friend.

The lights were bright only in this section where the tables were arranged in three long rows. Their young voices rolled into the darker basement area and rebounded. At intervals around the walls, the church's janitor had stacked mountains of other tables and chairs. Above the double doors leading to the hallway, Queen Elizabeth, in full regalia, hung tiredly. Her face had faded to a yellow-olive colour. Sonya was surprised it wasn't Juliana, the way her mother's friends continually oohed and aahed over the Dutch royal family.

She stared absentmindedly at the empty blackboard in front of her, a thin second-hand purchase, nicked and splotched in the struggle to pass on knowledge. She wished she didn't have to go upstairs to her bedroom right after catechism to finish reading *The Merchant of Venice* in preparation for tomorrow's quiz. Most of her friends in Grade 9 hated its strange line structure and the foreign-sounding names. Sonya hated the picture it conjured up in her mind. Imagine, insistently slicing away a pound of living flesh! How would you offer it — on a platter, like John the Baptist's

head?

Her thoughts wandered to the new minister. Rumours bounced through the congregation.

"Did you know he was a Marine once?"

"No, not just a Marine. A member of the elite; a Green Beret!"

"I heard he drank beer like crazy and swore a lot!"

"Naw"

"Yeah, but he was converted, like Paul. Huddled in the clay, bombs exploding all around him"

"There are no atheists in fox-holes," someone always intoned at that point in the story.

"No! He was wounded. He was so badly wounded the medics left him for dead. He couldn't call out. Nobody noticed him. He hovered between life and death on the battlefield for a long, long time."

"I heard that he promised if he made it through the war he would dedicate the rest of his life to leading the army of God."

Suddenly, he stood before them. As he introduced himself, Sonya studied him in detail. On Sundays, in the congregational auditorium, he stood alone and far above her. Her family always sat in the second last pew, right in front of the janitor, because her father liked to zip off after church and have his coffee. Watching Reverend Haak move on to the pulpit she had pictured an intense, rugged-looking, even handsome man.

Closer by, she could see more clearly. A thin brushcut topped Reverend Haak's small 50-year-old face. She had never seen a cut like his. Each hair stood ramrod stiff, but separate, unable to caress its fellows and so become a covering. High cheekbones buttressed indistinct eyes; a long nose arrowed towards thin lips. When he turned she saw what everyone whispered about. A purple scar curved from under the corner of his right eye to the bottom of his ear.

Sonya hoped catechism would be more exciting this year. Last year Reverend De Kleer had been so politely

formal. She remembered being briefed by the others when she moved here:

"Ah, it's a snap! All we do is sit side by side, in quiet rows, like in church. While he says a few words about the lesson you learn the Question and Answer. He likes to see your head bent down over the Psalter. When it's your turn, just close the book, smile a big smile and speak softly. There's always your neighbour's Psalter to help you through."

Except for an occasional prank by one or two of the boys, only the spectacle of Lena's weekly misery stifled their yawning. Although Lena was also in Grade 8, her well-developed body testified she could have been a high school sophomore. Healthy pink skin, sparkling brown eyes, perfectly balanced facial features, straight white teeth — she was a beauty. Wisps of her hair curled playfully around her face. And catechism was her Gehenna.

"Lena, stop stammering, girl! Say a little more than the first two words please, Lena."

"Did you study it this time, Lena?"

"Been listening to the radio a bit too much, Lena?"

Or: silence, for an interminable period, and then a weary sigh, an upraised glance and the clipped Dutch accent.

"All right, Lena. Study harder next week."

Always Lena answered melodiously, but her eyes reminded Sonya of a nervous forest creature, and often her soft-lipped smile quivered at the corners.

Lena, their moms and dads bluntly stated, was one of those who couldn't learn well. They all liked Lena. They all pitied her. But no one ever stood up for her.

★ ★ ★

Now, as Reverend Haak handed out the textbooks, he spoke briskly. "This is your catechism text. You will consider it more precious than any novel or school book in your possession. You will always have it with you in this class, as well as your pen and a Bible."

She looked at the new

booklet with interest. It seemed pretty ordinary. Soft-covered, piously brown. She flipped its pages. A written text and questions to accompany each section.

"Each week you will do the assigned homework. You will never attempt to set foot in this room on a Tuesday night without having each question answered fully and comprehensively. And every Sunday you are to take notes on one of my sermons, which I will collect and check. Should you miss a class, you will need a parental note in order to be re-admitted. Three notes and there will be a consultation with me. Is that clear?"

Perfectly clear. The class looked up at him in impervious silence. "Get off the pot!" the older ones undoubtedly snorted in the hidden recesses of their inner selves. But outwardly, they too remained impassive. They had learned the value of waiting in these matters.

For a few minutes Reverend Haak paced easily, back and forth, genially slapping a pointer against the palm of his hand. Then he stopped. He rested the pointer on the floor. Leaning his upper body forwards, he stared intently at one of them while obviously addressing the entire group. As though by osmosis, that person's discomfort seeped into others. They, too, began to fidget under the microscope of his eyes.

"I have heard that there are a number of rabble-rousers in your midst. I am placing you on notice that I demand respect." Reverend Haak stood still for a long time, his gaze determined.

Sonya knew from the way the older people talked together that the church considered the needs of its youth to be of paramount importance. Elsewhere, youth were taking drugs, having rebellious sit-ins in the very council chambers of those in lawful authority, mockingly offering daisies to soldiers with guns, and refusing to take enough baths. Boys had long hair and girls were no longer dressing nicely the way women always had. The church people feared the social upheavals taking place; they feared change. She knew how

diligently they had searched for a powerful man, decisive enough to clip any hint of deviant sproutings. She had heard them at their coffee gatherings.

"These are troubled times," they said.

"It is dangerous when the masses surge forward, like a wave beating against authority."

"It's all those baby boomers, born after the war. I read about it in *Time*. They think they can turn things upside down because there are so many of them."

"They were not brought up right."

"Things shouldn't be decided by force of numbers. God has placed an order in life," they trebled.

"Young people don't know about life. They need to be disciplined and taught. They should not be allowed to challenge or disobey those in lawful authority. The very health of the church depends on this," they said to each other in Sonya's hearing.

Sonya wondered again about the church's governing process. There was this nebulous thing called "office." It held authority. Was there some sparkling stream of God's authority that flowed through the office to make the person always right? They were just studying office in their Grade 9 Bible class. She had an office too, the teacher said: the office of believer. She was prophet, priest and king. She savoured the words again. Then she stored them away. It was too confusing as yet. Perhaps some offices were bigger and more important than others.

Anyway, it had taken a long time to find Reverend Haak. Some people thought that a number of ministers (as much a part of the emigrant exodus from Holland as ordinary people), while providing excellent Reformed teaching, were too removed from the nitty-gritty of the North American culture, not understanding its possible effects on the youth. Normally that would be no problem. But this was the big city and these were not normal times. "Love

can also express itself in hard discipline," the people of the church said to each other.

"Just look at how God dealt with the children of Israel."

Sonya mused about everything she saw and heard. "I wonder if Reverend Haak is going to push like this all year," she thought. "Maybe this staccato drill of rules is how he acts when he's under pressure. I wonder what he thinks about the changes taking place in the world? And does he sense the watchful eyes of the church people with their strong fears and traditions? Maybe he really wants to succeed at his new job. Maybe he has to prove to himself and to us that he's in full control." Reverend Haak's voice broke into her thoughts.

"In this classroom, when responding to a question you will always address me as 'Sir.' And each time you say your memory work or read aloud, you will move your chair back and stand up. Is that clear?"

"Perfectly," they thought, and imagined the lovely long scraping of slowly drawn chairs with tubular steel legs resisting the concrete floor.

"The penalty for not adequately knowing your memory work is to write it out, 10 times. Along with that you will produce a note from your parents giving a reason for your failure to perform. (She was suddenly glad that Lena's parents had moved the family to Warton that summer.) As I mentioned previously, three notes and there will be a parental consultation ... with me.

"All right," Reverend Haak was saying, "if there are no questions, turn, in your books, to page ..."

She saw Pete first. The auditorium doors were open. From her vantage point at the end of the first long row of tables she had a clear view of the long hallway.

Pete was different. Perhaps it was because he was born somewhere in the middle of a dozen kids that he developed a strong presence. Or perhaps he was just naturally more open. In any case, he was the only boy she really noticed when she first came to the big-city Christian school.

In Morristown there was

only one school and it was a public school, one of the main reasons her dad had moved the family. She hated leaving her friends. There she was Red Cross president, editor of the school newspaper, and president of the drama club. The Christian school had no such organizations. But surprisingly, it had something the Morristown Public School did not. Rude language and behaviour erupted easily when the teachers were out of earshot.

One day, in an unsupervised "spare," she saw Pete viciously jab his pencil into Irene's behind just as she was bending over Rita's desk. (Irene had braces and an upturned nose and an opinion on everything.) It was too much! She marched

"Young people don't know about life. They need to be disciplined and taught. They should not be allowed to challenge or disobey those in lawful authority...."

up to Pete, placed her nose close to his and wagged her finger as she yelled, "What kind of Christian are you? Don't you have any respect? You should be ashamed of yourself! Apologize to Irene!"

As she stood there, breathing furiously, she realized the sudden silence. Everyone was staring at them, Irene included. In fact, through her tears, Irene appeared the most incredulous. But Pete looked down and muttered something which she took to be an apology of sorts.

Shortly afterwards, on a cold windy day, the class played partner tag, an unusual occurrence. Pete, a year older than Sonya, asked her to be his partner. His hand, gripping hers, felt hard and strong as he whirled her this way and that, mercilessly chasing the others. They caught all the others. Afterwards, he held her hand a moment longer and grinned, "Good going! We make a good team, eh?"

He sauntered in now, unconcerned, one arm in a cast, held in place by a sling. Sonya wanted to cry out a warning. "Watch out, Pete," she wanted to say. "Hold back!"

But Pete, dressed in his black leather jacket, his wavy blond hair curving down over his forehead just so, his other hand tucked jauntily into the pocket of his blue jeans, his boots clacking their steel cleat song against the concrete floor, approached confidently.

As soon as Pete crossed the threshold, Reverend Haak stopped his diatribe. Pete didn't even look at him. He noticed an empty chair at the end of the second row, and sat down.

"You're late," said Reverend Haak, his voice hard, like a gavel striking wood.

"Yep," said Pete.

Reverend Haak's eyes narrowed swiftly. "You will address me as 'Sir.' Do you understand?"

Pete raised his head very slowly and opened his eyes wide as he faced Reverend Haak.

"Yep, Sir," he agreed.

Reverend Haak's whole being changed. He seemed to pull himself in, to concentrate. They all waited. When he did speak, each word issued as though it were a time-bomb, gift-wrapped, tied with a ribbon.

"Your name?"

"Pete."

"Pete what." It was not a question; it was a rasping imperative.

"Sir, Pete Vander Hart, Sir!"

The silence grew. Sonya began to notice background noises: the slow hum of the kitchen fridge in a nearby room, the dark creak of wood somewhere, the cars swooshing by on Milton Road.

Consciously, she willed every part of her being to retreat into immobility. She became a backdrop with the others, like the scenery in a painting.

"You will stand when you address me!"

Each word had a life of its own. She pictured a mountain top with all the people down

below, hands uplifted, watching as with smoke and thunder each word flashed out in neon-lighted pomp.

Pete leaned forward as though he were about to comply. Then he reached back to the table behind him with a langorous leather-armed movement and, leaning on that table, he slowly tipped his chair back and carefully rested his broken arm on his chest.

For Reverend Haak, it was the last straw. "I was warned about you," Sonya heard him mutter, as he rushed by.

Before anyone could breathe, Reverend Haak threw Pete across the room. Pete's upturned chair clattered after him. The inner silence translated each action into slow motion for her brain to record: Pete's turning leather-black and bandaged-white, Pete's falling to a crumpled heap, the crack of the chair's skeleton as it shuddered to a stop.

They sat as still as death.

Sonya saw Reverend Haak's heaving shoulders. She saw his lips moving but his words seemed to be sucked into a vacuum. She watched his finger point to the door. She saw Pete push up, heavily, against the concrete. He left the room, alone. It was too immediately complicated for Sonya to decode. She engraved it in her memory bank.

She did not see Reverend Haak pass her on his way back to the front of the class. His voice sounded normal when he picked up the pointer and looked their way. He continued where he had left off.

"Turn, in your books, to page three, Lord's Day One, Question and Answer One. Sonya, you will read aloud."

Her eyes felt so big, she thought she'd never be able to close them again. Trembling, she touched cold fingers to the book and thickly turned its pages. Then she lifted her chair, very carefully, and stood up on frozen legs.

"What is your only comfort in life and death?" she read, dispassionately.

"That I, with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own but belong unto my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ ..."

Annita Maat lives in Oakville, Ont.

The poetry of Linda Lensink

Morning meditations

The Earth is Bread

"The earth is bread;
the sun is wine,"
and my own sweet supping
of it
has endlessly sufficed my soul.
Unity, purity, peace
the nourishment
from such a supper.

No longer now
can I (or we)
in innocence
partake
in this communion.
My sin is communal and (oh so)
personal
(the toothpaste tube, those plastic toys!
our warm/cool house, and all those bags and lids!)
and restoration requires repentance.
The bread, the wine,
accuse.

And so, as we drive the 401
and from my car window
I see the sunset
play lovingly
and splashingly spectacular
on the hills and woods and farms and trees
and the grey-black-potentious clouds
heighten the greens and blacks
of hills and woods and farms and trees
and the orange sun is orange and
the promise of rain promises,

I avert my eyes.

There's a certain joy
in seeing the sunlight
fall
on the knittedness
of my wool sweater.
Bright and warm, the meshed fibre.

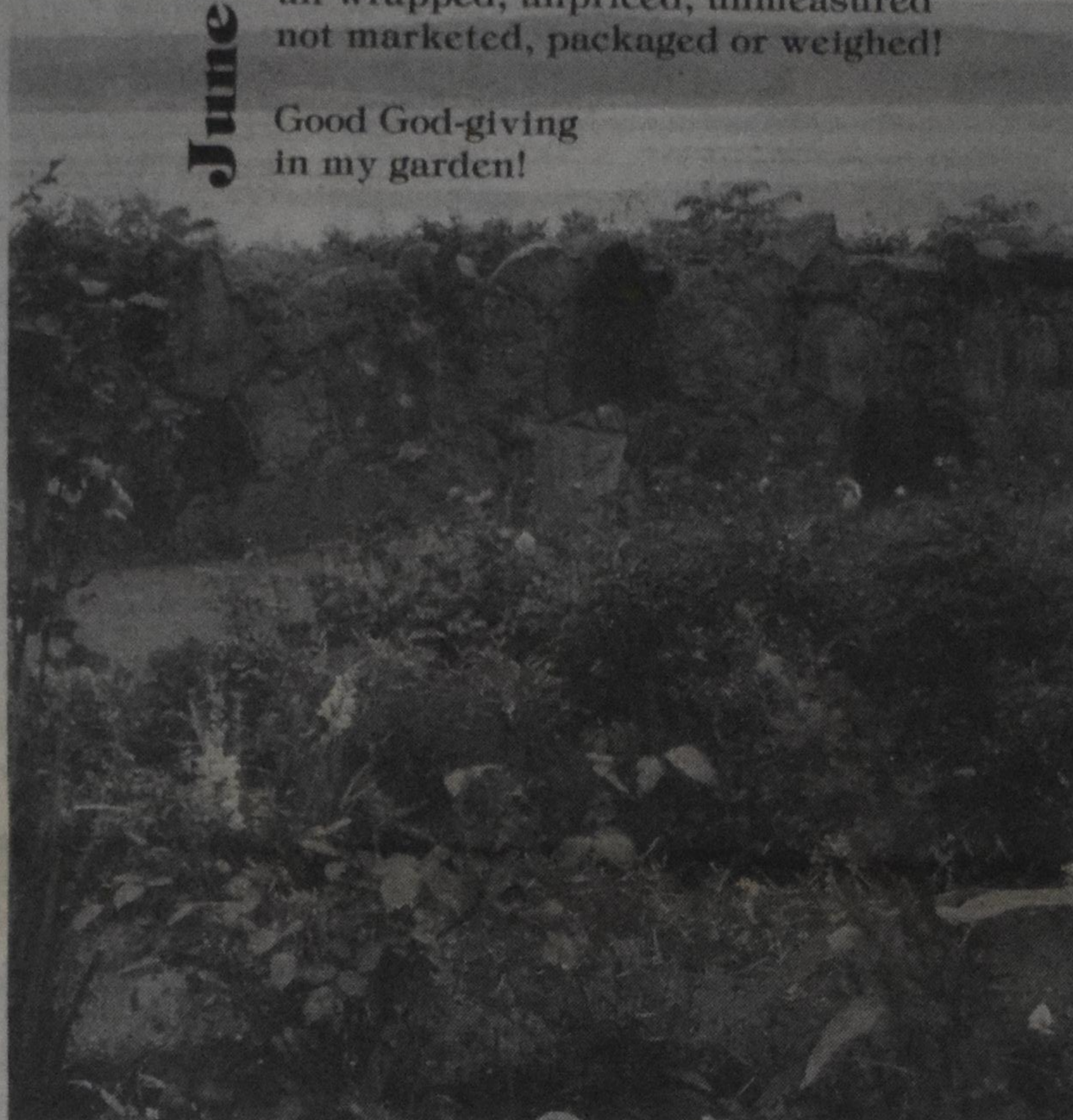
I know a peaceful pleasure
at the way the sunlight invades
pours
through closed lids and lashes.
Bright and warm, that inner place.

June Harvest

a luscious harvest,
lascivious red,
offers itself up
in my garden.

an unadvertised special!
un-wrapped, unpriced, unmeasured
not marketed, packaged or weighed!

Good God-giving
in my garden!



For A. and I.

sisters of my soul
and sharers in a secret sorrow,
come.
give your gift of brokenness
that we may know ourselves
as broken beings
and so be whole.



He Always Wanted a Pinwheel

I don't know if I'll ever
get my mind around the fact that
a young man must eventually
become
old.
How does that young guy
with grey face
and crooked hands
reconcile
his body (you have to say it's him)
to his who he dancing was
and always will be?

Tell me how to understand
that
and then
maybe
after that
I can start to think about how
to lay a body in the cold
hard ground.

Linda Lensink lives in St. Catharines, Ont.

Starting the stupid tractor (a true story)

Herman Proper

The day started well enough. I was at my Saturday job, working for Mr. Dirksen. He was a tall forward-leaning, skinny but muscular Dutchman who never spoke of his muscles but took pride in them nonetheless. He was fond of the joke on Dutch pronunciation: "Ja. I am dirrty and my vife iss dirrty-two." He struggled to make a go of it on a mixed farm and was doing it successfully. I worked for him for a number of years. I helped him clean pens, castrate piglets, hoe corn, move in baby chicks, kill a steer, jack up the corner of his old log-cabin house prior to renovations and do many other kinds of jobs.

The morning in question, we needed the tractor for some job or other — after the excitement of that morning, I can no longer remember what — but it would not start. It turned over all right but it would not catch. "Maybe it's damp or something." In retrospect, it must have been too late in the morning to be damp any longer.

"We'll get out the pickup truck and pull it. Then it will likely start."

Why not? It had worked before and should work now.

Mr. Dirksen got the truck and backed it up to the tractor. We chained them together. He got in the truck and ordered me on the tractor with instructions on what to do: "Put it in second and hold the clutch in. When we

pick up some speed, you let the clutch go and it should start. Got it?"

Yeah, I got it. Although I did not have my driver's licence, I did know how to drive. I had driven a tractor for quite a few years and had already learned how to drive a car. I think I already had my beginner's licence, but maybe not. About my driving ability, I had no questions. Nor, it seemed, did Mr. Dirksen.

Off we went down the driveway. I suppose I must have let the clutch of the tractor out once or twice to try to start it as we went out to the road, but that I no longer remember. Out on the road, we picked up speed going down towards the Seventh Line. I let out the clutch several times while Mr. Dirksen looked over his shoulder impatiently to see if the tractor had started yet. The tractor motor turned over while I fiddled with the gas and choke, but it would not catch. At the Seventh Line, we turned the truck and tractor around and prepared to head back.

"Here! You get in the truck and I'll get on the tractor." Obviously, I did not know as much about starting tractors as he did.

I got in the truck and looked back to see if he was ready. Then, putting the truck in gear, I slowly allowed the chain to be tightened and began to pull the stubborn tractor. It was obviously being

obstinate and I was beginning to get annoyed.

When the truck had picked up a bit of speed, I put my right arm over the back of the seat and looked out the back window to see if the tractor was going to start. No such luck. Suddenly, Mr. Dirksen started waving his right arm vigorously over his head. What was he doing that for, I wondered? When I looked ahead, I saw why. I was almost in the ditch! I slowed down, pulled the truck onto the road, and picked up some speed again. This time the tractor was going to start or else! I would not stop pulling until it did!

I pointed the truck absolutely straight down the road, held the wheel firmly, and again swung my arm over the back seat to look at that wretched tractor. Was it going to start this time? Mr. Dirksen didn't pay much attention to the tractor. Again he began to swing his arm over his head, this time more wildly. What on earth did the man want? His swinging became more frantic. Finally he stood up on the brakes trying to stop the tractor — just as the truck drifted out into space.

It landed flat on its side and everything went dead quiet as I jumped to my feet, standing on the ground in one window with my head sticking out the other. I was shaking violently. Mr. Dirksen jumped off the tractor and ran

crazily towards me. I remember climbing out of the truck window and finding my feet, managing to walk around a bit.

No, no, I wasn't hurt at all. No, I was all right. Yes, I'd be okay in a few minutes.

I waited by the truck while Mr. Dirksen went to the neighbour's for some help. A car came along. No, no one was hurt; the truck had just gone in the ditch and the boss had gone to get some help to pull it out. No, we didn't need any other help.

Soon the neighbour was on the scene and we chained the truck to his big blue tractor. It didn't take too long to get it out of the ditch. He unchained the truck and then started pulling our tractor back to the farm. We didn't try to start it. Mr. Dirksen drove the truck.

Luckily, it was about dinner time so I had some more time to recover before I had to get back to work. Unluckily, we had peas for dinner. With my hand still shaking, I could barely keep them on my spoon.

After dinner, we put some gas in the tractor and started it up.

Herman Proper is high school curriculum co-ordinator for the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools. He lives in Hamilton, Ont.

Silencing that small voice

Bill Kritlow

A friend lost his job. Given three months severance pay and having very little savings, he had three months to find another. Being nearly 50 and continually employed since he got out of the army 25 years before, both he and his wife found this sudden on-rush of events difficult.

The friend was me.

What made it difficult?

The voice. That voice that lives in the back of the head. Mine resides just in back and below the right ear. And it says things like:

"You're on your own, you know." Or:

"I'm going to let you fall this time." Or:

"Now you're going to get what you deserve. I've been easy on you in the past, but the day of judgment has come."

It says it hypnotically. When I'm weakest. When I've just learned a job I wanted went to someone else. Or when a head

hunter hasn't called me in weeks. Or when my family needs money for something essential and if we spend it we have only two and a half months instead of three months to get the stream of pay checks going again.

It speaks persistently and sometimes gives visions....

I traverse a tight rope and a great gust of wind suddenly springs up. I wobble and step forward and back to regain balance, but the effort is fruitless. It knocks me off and I fall and fall and fall into a netless abyss....

Of course it's not a voice to

which any of us should listen. It's the voice of unbelief. But just recognizing it as such and ignoring it doesn't mean it goes away. It might for a moment or two. But it will return next time a tire needs replacing or a resume is returned or the boss scowls at your work.

How, then, do you silence the voice for a longer time or, perhaps, even for good? How do you reaffirm your faith? Let me tell how I do it.

First, I look at the people around me, then at myself. I think and I feel and I realize that none of us is an accident. Evolutionists are basically nuts. We couldn't have crawled out of some primordial swamp, shed tails and webbed feet and coughed up our gills and become people. Never in a million billion years of "chance." No. There is a creator. A God — God exists.

Then I ask myself: Has this creator God ever let me down before?

He hasn't. But not only hasn't he let me down, he's given me far more than I would ever think possible. Not only did I once have a job, I had (and still have) a career. Not only do I have a wife, I have a wife I love and children I cherish. Not only do I enjoy writing, but I write novels and screenplays. Not only has the Lord never let me down, he's filled my cup, tamped it down a couple of times and filled it up again. Let me down? Never.

Now I go to the Word — the reservoir of God's promises. And I read those wonderful promises over and over again. Then I say them to myself:

"I will never leave nor forsake you."

"I will be with you until the end of the earth."

"All things work together for good to those who love God, those called according to his purpose."

"They meant it as evil, but God meant it for good."

And then I read an account in Scripture of God's faithfulness. One of my favourites is about Elijah in 1 Kings 19:11, 12. After his great triumph on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:10-45), Jezebel threatens Elijah's life and Elijah escapes to Mount Horeb and hides in a cave. After complaining to the Lord that he's the only man of God left, God tells Elijah to stand on the mountain and that the Lord would pass by. God does come, but he isn't in the powerful wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in a fire. He's in a gentle whisper — in the calm.

God of order

God is a God of calm, of purpose. He's a God with a plan....

"...All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be" (Ps. 139:16).

"...For it is God who works

in you to will and to act according to his good purpose" (Phil. 2:13).

And then I pray. I take all the concerns, all the anxieties, all the unbelief and I lay it at the feet of him "who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all — how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). I'm honest with my Lord. I tell him about the voice. I tell him what the voice says and how it plants these hopeless visions in my head and how I worry and how I know the Lord won't let these things happen, but....

I reflect on how God is real, and how he's always provided more than I ever deserved, and how he's promised wonderful things to me and those I love, and then I thank the Lord for the opportunity to be his child even when things look a bit uncertain. Of course, with God there is no uncertainty and I say this over and over again. And then I say "Amen" and let the prayer linger in my heart for a while.

Finally, I get up from my knees and get busy.

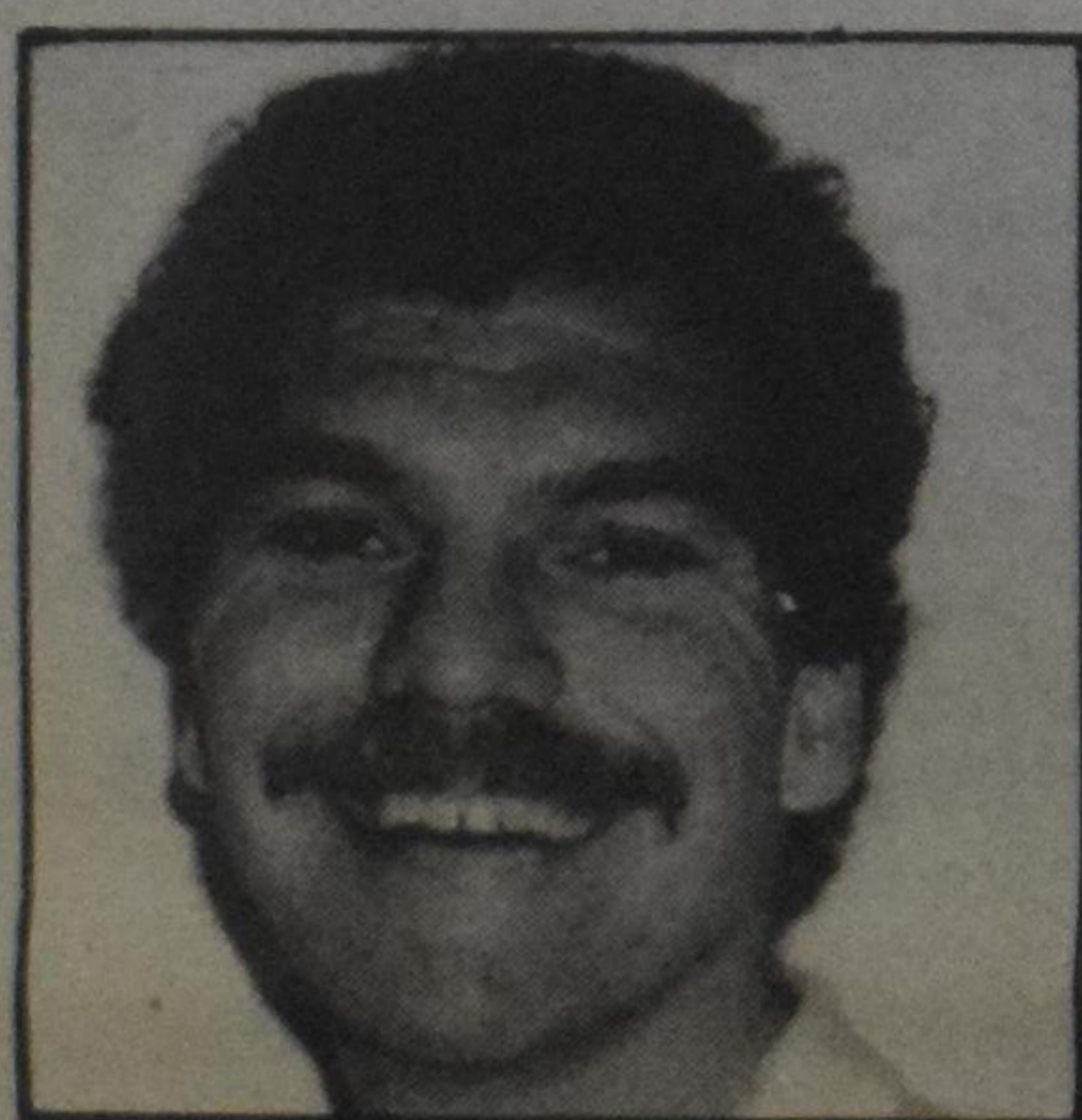
But not just busy. I get busy doing those things the Lord's given me to do, those things that if Jesus were in my place, he'd be doing.

It could be cleaning the house or fixing dinner or writing that report or reading that book. It could be making that difficult phone call or cleaning up the back yard or helping my child with homework — or any one of a million things, some of them even enjoyable.

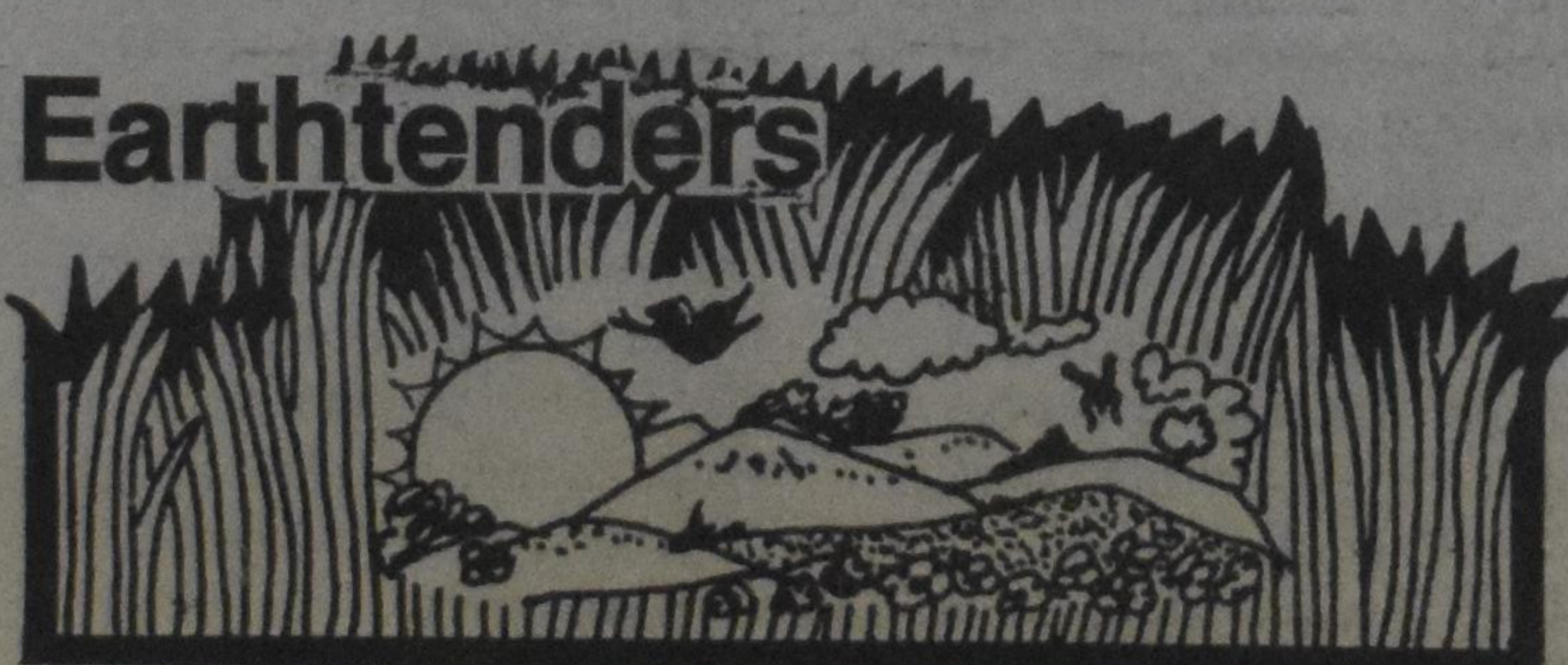
There's something cleansing about doing what the Lord wants done and it keeps that voice at bay, keeps it mute.

That's what I do when Satan is whispering his lies in my ear. I hope it helps when he's whispering them in yours.

Bill Kritlow is a novelist and screenplay writer from Fountain Valley, Calif.



Harry Spaling



Our place and task in the environment

Environmental politics

The environment is gradually penetrating the armour of Canadian politics. Ten years ago it occupied a marginal place at the fringe of political decisions. Five years ago public opinion polls pushed politicians to move the environment up the political agenda. Today the environment holds centre stage in important policy decisions. Consider, for example, future federal-provincial relations and the proposed Canada/U.S./Mexico free trade pact.

Recent rulings by the Supreme Court of Canada altered longstanding approaches to assessing the environmental impacts of resource development projects involving Ottawa and the provinces. In 1989 the court reviewed the Rafferty-Alameda dam project in Saskatchewan and ruled that the federal government must carry out its own environmental assessments or jointly with a province but could no longer delegate them solely to the provincial level. In 1990 the court ordered the federal government to study the environmental impacts of the Oldman River dam project in Alberta. The effect of these court decisions has been to increase the involvement and influence of the federal government in provincial resource development projects.

Given Canada's constitutional crisis at the moment, the increase in federal political power adds fuel to the provincial fervour for decentralization of authority. In upcoming constitutional negotiations a major bargaining chip may be federal control over the environment. This may be especially true in Quebec where the joint federal-provincial environmental review of the massive James Bay II hydro-electric project is currently at a

stalemate and tensions are simmering.

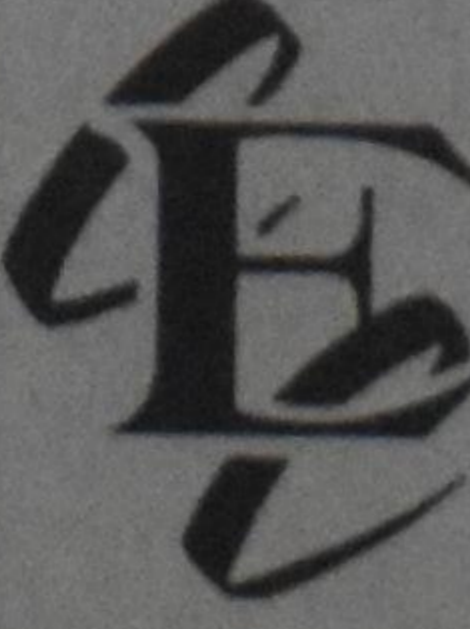
Can't be ignored

The Canada/U.S./Mexico free trade pact is also very much an environmental issue. The first free trade agreement between Canada and the United States didn't even raise the environment as a point of discussion. Current negotiations will have to. A coalition of nearly two dozen environmental groups from the three countries involved is actively pursuing this cause. Congressional leaders in the U.S. have asked President Bush to outline how environmental safeguards would be handled in the pact. Negotiators have already committed themselves to regulating specific products, such as pesticides which are known for their polluting potential.

A major environmental concern is Mexico. Although that country has improved its environmental protection laws considerably in the last few years, enforcement is a critical problem. Lax enforcement may attract many Canadian and American industrial and manufacturing plants. This may provide an important economic incentive to include the environment in trade negotiations.

The environment and politics used to be like oil and water; they didn't mix. They still don't mingle that well. Despite the rift, the environment has styled a new brand of politics. The inevitable next step will be the astute political candidate who will label her- or himself...the environmentally friendly politician.

Harry Spaling is a doctoral student in geography at the university of Guelph, Guelph, Ont.



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East Germans have much to bring to a unified Germany

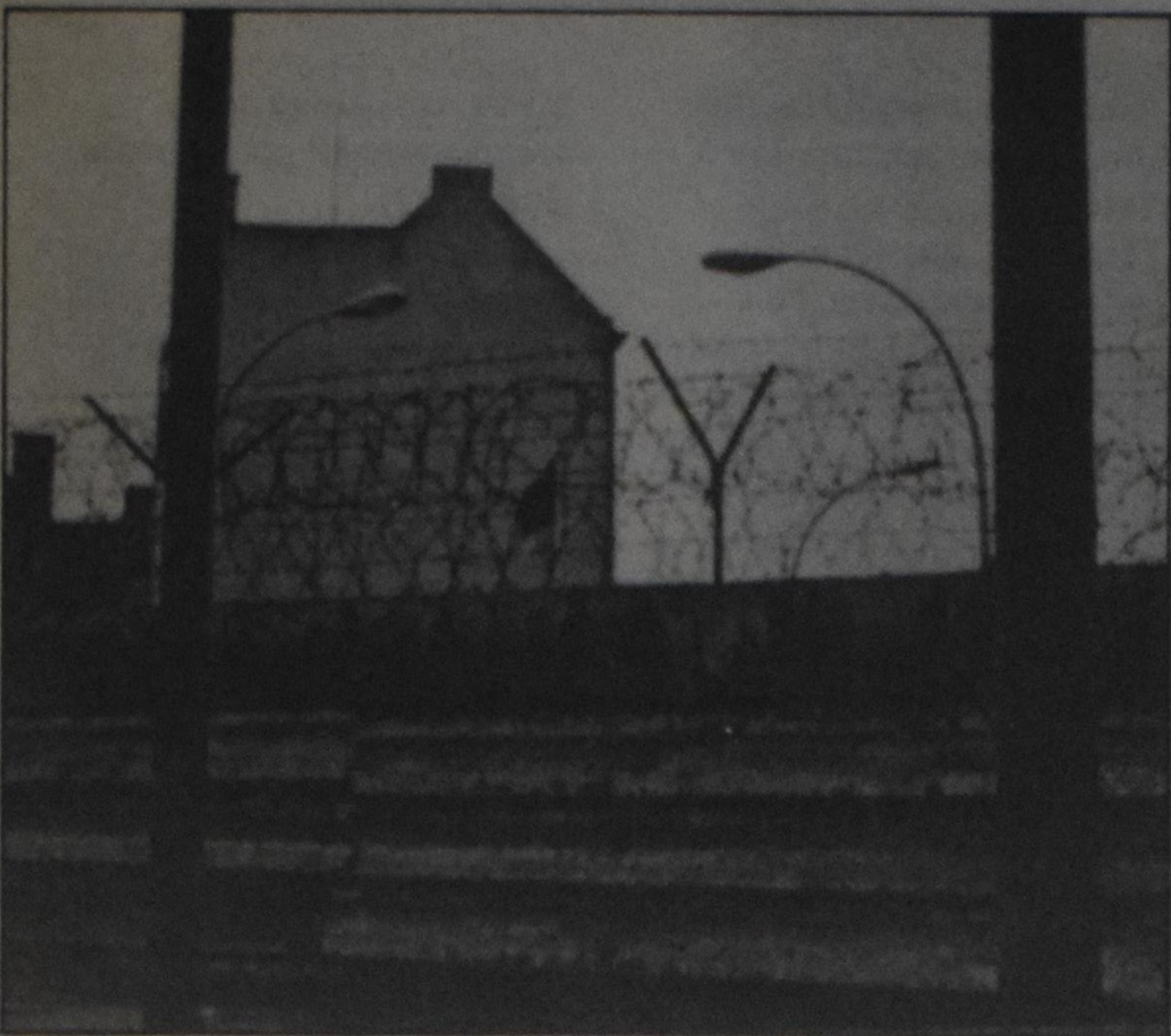


Photo: The World Book Encyclopedia
The Berlin Wall was built through Berlin by the East German communists in 1961.

Wallace Bratt

The "old" East Germany, or German Democratic Republic, as it called itself, is dead. Scarcely a trace remains of the wall around what once was West Berlin, and on the "death strip" along the old inner-German border trees and wildflowers or fields of grain are growing. Border guards are gone; control points have disappeared; and East German friends now send postcards from Oslo or London instead of Dresden or the beaches of the Baltic.

Despite such new-found freedom, the transition from the socialist GDR to Western democracy and a free-market economy has proved to be very painful. The mood in the "new federal states" is, at best, troubled. Unemployment has risen drastically and threatens to go still higher.

Retirees living on a fixed modest pension feel threatened by the prospect of higher rent and the reality of more expensive consumer goods. Both petty and violent crime has increased. Comprehensive changes in the educational system have proved to be unsettling, sometimes even traumatic, for teachers,

students and parents alike.

Nothing to offer

The pain is only increased for many Eastern Germans by their perception of their status in the newly unified "fatherland." Western Germans have told them over and over again that they do not know how to work, that they are not patient enough, and that they lack initiative and creativity. Their 40 years in the socialist wilderness, they are told, were wasted time.

During a June briefing in Washington the cultural attache assigned to the German embassy put it succinctly: the Eastern Germans have "nothing" to bring to unified Germany. It's that simple.

Despite such arrogance shown by more than a few of their Western compatriots, only the most embittered Eastern Germans suggest that they were better off under the old system. It is difficult to feel nostalgia for a police state which, despite the considerable security it offered, deprived its citizens of countless basic freedoms and a modicum of human dignity.

Even perceptive tourists and visitors to the GDR could not help but encounter the

humiliation, frustration and rage felt by so many citizens penned in behind the wall. "Real existing socialism," as its perpetrators dubbed it, was an affront and an offense.

Special people

At the same time, however, any suggestion that no human or specifically Christian good came of those 40 years is untenable. Observers who were privileged to develop friendships with GDR Christians and church leaders surely see things differently. It is inappropriate to depict them as martyrs, as heroic defenders of the faith who never fell short. That they were not; nor did they ever make such claims about themselves. But many of them were, by God's grace, very special people.

I think of our friend Hellmut, pastor of the City Church in Wittenberg. Hellmut knew fear, even trembling fear, when, after a trip to West Berlin, he stood at the border with his socks stuffed full of currency to be used for his church's Christian kindergarten. He also knew anger and intense frustration. He realized that he was under regular surveillance and that any errant word he spoke or prayed in his worship services would be reported to the *Stasi*, the secret police.

Hellmut, like all other pastors behind the wall, had to

wrestle with issues of principle and compromise. I'm sure he faltered at times, but I also heard him speak fearless prayers in the presence of party members. There was a stalwart honesty about him. In a society which tended to force devious behaviour, he struggled to maintain integrity in both his public and private speech. And he loved to laugh, despite it all.

Then there was his brother, Gerhard, a skilled surgeon and chief of the Lutheran hospital in Eisenach. Like Hellmut, Gerhard returned to the GDR voluntarily after having had much of his medical training in the West. Gerhard's hospital was immaculately clean, but was, by Western standards, old and shabby.

"We have fine success at our hospital," he told me. "We operate with little luxury but with a lot of love." And that love was apparent as he walked the wards, had coffee with his surgical nurses and consulted with his colleagues. I know, because I watched him.

Gerhard was intensely and courageously involved in political developments in the weeks before, during and after his country's quiet revolution. He has a special affection for Gorbachev, for Gerhard is convinced that without him the revolution in East Germany would scarcely have been possible. But I also have heard him affirm both privately and

publicly that prayer was the most powerful force driving the revolution — not politicians or political pressure.

And Hellmut and Gerhard are only two members of that larger body of Christ who struggled to live lives of discipleship behind the wall.

The 40 years of socialist wilderness in the GDR were difficult and brought its citizens much human hurt, indignity, and suffering. But only callous indifference, arrogance or ignorance could term that time and those people a waste.

It could well be that Western German economists have little to learn from the GDR's economic debacle. Nor can Western political theorists learn much that is positive from East German socialism. But those of us with Christian friends in that land learned much from our association with them. We learned about commitment, about integrity, about the virtue of a gentle bearing and humility.

Such virtues may not bring economic success in the marketplace, but they could enhance the quality of life of any society, regardless of its economic system. And they surely are central to the Kingdom whose boundaries transcend all borders of human making.

Wallace Bratt is a professor in the department of Germanic languages at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Couple develops 'profound respect' for traditional health care of Labrador's Innu people

SASKATOON, Sask. (MCC) — Bernie Wiebe went to Labrador to work as a doctor and teach Native people about health care, but during his two and a half years there he developed a profound respect for traditional Native health practices.

Wiebe and his wife, Marie, originally from Rosetown, Sask., went to Labrador with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to work with Grenfell Health Services. They lived in Happy Valley/Goose Bay, and worked with the nearby Innu community of Sheshashit.

One of the ironies uncovered by the Wiebes is that while health services for the Innu in Labrador have improved greatly over the past 40 years, the actual quality of Innu life has deteriorated significantly. One of the reasons for this, they say, is that the improvement in health services occurred at the same time the

Innu were forced to give up their traditional way of life to live in settlements.

Disintegrating culture

"The elders told us that in the old days they could take care of their own health needs," Bernie says. "They didn't need doctors and hospitals. They utilized a variety of things from their environment, from the plant and animal world around them."

"They say their inability to do so now is related to their loss of culture."

The Wiebes came to realize that this storehouse of traditional knowledge was being lost as elders passed away. After discussions with local leaders they decided to research the traditional health practices of the Innu in an effort to preserve them.

Information for the project was collected by videotaping

visits with elders. The tapes have been placed in the Innu Resource Centre in Sheshashit.

During the research the Wiebes say they gained "an unmistakable belief in the richness of Innu culture, a strong sense of the wholeness represented by traditional Innu life and a reinforced awareness of the deterioration of Innu life and health caused by a rapid, involuntary cultural change."

They also came to see that the traditional health care methods of the Innu may be instructive for modern society which, Bernie suggests, is increasingly trying to get away from the model of "a pill for every ill."

"It may point the way to taking responsibility for our own health care," he says, "instead of relying on a 'quick fix.'"

The Wiebes are members of the Herschel, Sask., Ebenfeld Mennonite Church.

COUPON

The "women in office" decision of the CRC

This special four-page insert (*Calvinist Contact*, May 24, 1991) carries the reflections of the Rev. Howard Vanderwell, President of Synod 1990. Copies of this insert are still available. Orders can be placed as follows:

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B.C. school district vetoes Gideons' request

VANCOUVER, Canada (EP) — A B.C. school district which oversees 48 elementary schools near Vancouver recently voted to bar the Gideons from offering New Testaments in the schools.

The Coquitlam School District trustees voted 7-1 June 25 against Gideon International's request to distribute consent forms to Grade 5 students for parents to sign for a free copy of the New

Testament, according to a report in *Christian Info News*, a newspaper serving greater Vancouver and the Fraser Valley. Two years ago Vancouver Schools District made a similar decision,

according to the report.

More than 50 supporters of the Gideon organization attended a school board meeting to debate the request. Trustee Ron Parks said he opposed the measure because the moral and ethical foundations of Canada have been shaped by those of different religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. "We constantly pride ourselves on our tolerance and commitment to freedom of religion and speech," he told *Now*, a community newspaper.

However, this is not "freedom of religion," said Debra Fieguth, editor of *Christian Info News*. "This is freedom from religion."

Coquitlam trustee Maxine Wilson, who cast the single vote in favour of the Gideons' request, said she once accompanied her daughter on a school field trip to a Sikh temple. If the children can learn about the Sikh religion, she reasoned, they should also be given the opportunity to learn about the Christian faith.

"Almost all our literature is influenced by Christianity and has references to the Bible," said Wilson, a former English teacher. With no understanding of the Bible, students will miss much of the significance in literature. "I think it's denying our whole heritage and culture," she added. "What we've noticed is an erosion in the tolerance towards Christianity and increased tolerance to anything else."

Biblical illiteracy an educational handicap

"To suggest a knowledge of the Bible is useful when studying English literature is a complete understatement," wrote Fieguth in an editorial comment in regards to the school board decision. "A knowledge of the Bible is essential if one is to gain understanding of writers from 14th century Geoffrey Chaucer on down. One can hardly read Dante's *Divine Comedy*, T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*, ... books by Russian writers Tolstoy or Solzhenitsyn, without having some sense of the Bible and its place in literature."

She added, "That the Bible is

integral to Western culture is widely accepted among academics. University English departments regularly offer courses on the literature of the Bible. Northrop Frye, Canada's most important literary scholar, who died earlier this year, castigated those modern teachers and students whose ignorance of the Bible he described as 'malpractice in education' and cultural suicide."

Fieguth continued, "A community college English instructor wrote an article in *The Vancouver Sun* several months ago about the shocking biblical illiteracy he found in his students. Himself an agnostic, he was appalled when he asked his class to bring Bibles and found that few of them owned one or had ever read one."

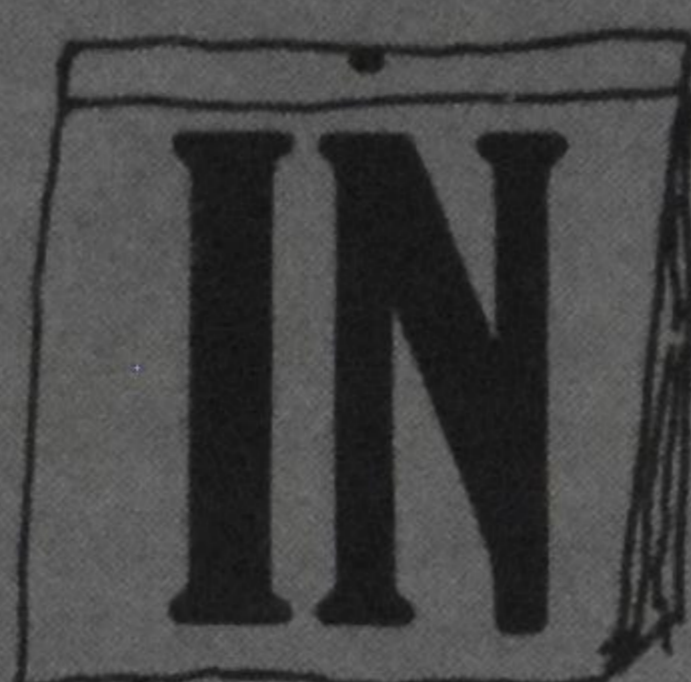
The Gideons have been distributing New Testaments in the province for 60 years, said spokesperson Bligh Stockwell. Denying their distribution is "a denial of personal freedom," he said. The rejection of the proposal is to sacrifice Christianity "on the altar of multi-culturalism."

Stockwell added that there has been "amazing support" for the Gideons in the community "from people from every walk of life." He noted that there have also been numerous letters of support in local newspapers.

Richard Dodding, a former teacher and Coquitlam resident for 18 years, compared the action of the school board to the attitude of teachers in the Soviet Union, where he recently visited. As executive director of Mission Fest, Dodding and his wife, Arlene, also a teacher, met with Soviet teachers to educate them about Christianity. "After 70 years of banning the Bible in Russia the school administrators are now asking for help in order to provide their youth with a moral framework for living," Dodding wrote in a letter to the school trustees. He added, "Now here we are asking if we should even allow our parents the choice of asking for a New Testament."



Peter and Marja are



Dear P & M:

I know that fellow pictured in *Calvinist Contact*, who now has a regular column and serves as a pastor in St. Catharines. That's Peter Slofstra who was the CRC chaplain at the University of Western Ontario several years ago.

I have a question! Peter, how do you answer a Christian who is confused because he has always believed that the earth is young, based on Genesis which says it was created in six days, while professional geologists like myself and Christian astronomers like Howard Van Till maintain that the earth is old? How do you deal with someone who wonders what to believe and finds his or her faith tested over this issue?

On campus the issue simmers on but not at the temperature of past days. It seems to me that this issue has tied the Christian Reformed Church up in knots internally. Local United and Baptist churches have also put energy into this debate by sponsoring creationists as speakers.

I maintain the Almighty has one big problem on his hands due in part to his own making. All I can do is write letters and the occasional short essay. I could write a couple of books on the basis of my letter file, but I feel restrained by Ecclesiastes 12:12. Until the Lord takes some action, this issue will continue to give Christianity a black eye. Too bad! It has so much to offer.

By the way, I know what I would tell your member, but I won't have the chance. Besides it might unsettle him or her even more.

C. Gordon Winder
Professor of geology (emeritus)
University of Western Ontario

Dear Gordon:

During my campus ministry I dealt with many confused and distressed students who came into the Chaplains' Centre from their geology and anthropology courses wondering how they could do science and yet maintain their faith. I discovered first-hand that intellectually shattered young people who were taught to think in black and white terms were ill-equipped to handle the complex and intriguing questions that surfaced at university.

My beginning point with such students was the Bible. I showed them that even the most literal interpretation of Genesis 1 indicates that the sun, the device by which we measure a day, was not created until the fourth day. Regardless of our approach to Scripture, Genesis reveals at least three initial "days" that were radically different from the concept of "day" as we know it. In addition, both the Old and the New Testaments alert us to the fact that a day in God's sight is like a thousand years, a poetic image that represents an immeasurable number (Psalm 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8). Scripture itself, in other words, gives us the room to theorize

about an old earth. Genesis nowhere insists that the universe or our planet are 6,000 years young. It does explicitly teach that God created, that he created in an orderly way, and that humans are the crown of this creation.

On another even more important tack I would remind such students that the Bible does not function as a scientific textbook. In fact, Reformed theology has never approached the Scriptures with that expectation. Using different authors and literary styles, the Word tells us about God's creation, humanity's fall into sin, and Christ's redemption. Where one stands on the age of the earth is not a litmus test of his or her faith. Those who say that it is cause unnecessary difficulties for those who study the sciences. I strongly suspect that those who insist that the Bible is a scientific text and use it to prove that the earth is young are more influenced by fundamentalism than Reformed theology.

Frankly, we find it hard to believe that fellow Christians have made this scientific question a matter of doctrinal dispute. In all humility, we should take David's attitude to heart when he writes, "I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me" (Ps. 131:1b). By all means study them, research them, theorize about them and be fascinated by them. But let's remember that ultimately we're dealing with things that only God can fully explain.

Faith and science can, in fact, must walk hand in hand as surely as special revelation and general revelation complement each other. Anything that drives this partnership apart does disservice to the human intellect and creates unnecessary crises of faith for our students, our scholars and anyone who has ever explored the wonders of God's creation in Drumheller or the Niagara Escarpment.

Thanks for your letter, Gordon, as well as your article (C.C. May 24) about this same issue. We agree with you that these peripheral issues gives Christianity a bad name on campus and elsewhere. How sad that all that wasted heat and passion play right into Satan's hands and push persons away from Jesus, the Lord of the Universe.

Our answer may unsettle a few of our readers but it will have been worth it if it helps one young adult hold on to his or her faith while studying at university or college.

Write to: P & M
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Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brouwer-Parlevliet, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

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With our love and congratulations:</p> <p>Klaas & Ruth Vandermeer — Cambridge, Ont. Leona, Dave & Ann, Mike Siebe & Mary Vandermeer — Orangeville, Ont. Jay, Wesley, Rosanne Dorothy VanderMeer — Georgetown, Ont. Sye & Elly Vandermeer — Georgetown, Ont. Christine, Jack, Jeffrey Janet & Mike Hunnensen — Cambridge, Ont. Melissa, Nicole, Bryce Harry & Sandra Vandermeer — Georgetown, Ont. Craig, Mark, Steven, Heather Home address: R.R. #5, Georgetown, ON L7G 4S8</p> <p>1946 1991 45 jaar getrouwd</p> <p>Hilly en Jaap, Namens ons allemaal wensen wij jullie op 29 augustus, 1991, een prettige dag en voor de toekomst veel voorspoed en God's onmisbare zegen toe in jullie verdere huwelijk.</p> <p>Aukje en Minne Duurd en Ciska Sjoerd en Hilly Harke en Anne Sep en Fedde Siebe en Tet Joukje en Lieuwe</p> <p>1966 1991 We wish to extend our love and congratulations to our parents,</p> <p>MIKE and ROSE DEBEER (nee Hogeterp)</p> <p>as they celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary on Sept. 10, 1991. We give thanks to the Lord for the years they have had together and pray for his continued blessing in the years to come.</p> <p>All our love: Jason, Lesley & Adrian Pat Meredith Melissa</p> <p>"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, who abides in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust'" (Ps. 91:1,2).</p> <p>Open house to be held in Ebenezer Chr. Ref. Church, Jarvis, Ont., on Sept. 7, 1991 from 7:30-9:00 p.m. Home address: R.R. #1, Jarvis, ON NOA 1J0</p>	 <p><i>Congratulations to Simon and Hilda Viss (nee Van Polen) on the occasion of their 65th wedding anniversary and Hilda's 87th birthday!</i></p> <p>1926 September 4 1991 With joy and gratitude to God, we are happy to announce the 65th wedding anniversary of our parents (and Mom's 87th birthday),</p> <p>SIMON and HILDA VISS (nee Van Polen)</p> <p>May the Lord bless you richly as you continue to be a blessing to all of us.</p> <p>Children: Norman, Norma Paul & Carolyn Viss Joe & Joyce Vander Kwaak 13 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. Home address: 437 S. Elm Ave. Ripon, CA 95366 U.S.A.</p> <p>With joy and thanksgiving we wish to announce the wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>ABE and JACKIE WAMSTEEKER who were married 45 years ago in Pynacker, the Netherlands, on September 4, 1946.</p> <p>With love and congratulations from your children and grandchildren:</p> <p>Peter & Wilma Wamsteeker — Mississauga, Ont. Richard, Darlene, Anthony Adrian & Tina Wamsteeker — Meaford, Ont. Melanie, Skip Henry & Jeannette Myderwyk — Cambridge, Ont. Kerri, Jodi Rex & Leah Wamsteeker — Hagersville, Ont. Nathan, Wendie, Lesley, Katie Shirley Kellough — Cambridge, Ont. Natasha Henry & Yvonne Westerman — Courtice, Ont.</p> <p>Open house to be held on September 4, 1991, D.V., in the auditorium of the Zion Chr. Ref. Church, 409 Adelaide St., E., Oshawa, Ont., from 7 till 9 p.m. Best wishes only, please. Home address: 237 Thomas St., Oshawa, ON L1J 1M2</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>HOUSTON, B.C.: Houston Christian School, located in the beautiful Bulkley Valley of North Central B.C., has a half-time Kindergarten teaching position available. Please address all inquiries to Mr. Doyle Smiens, Principal, Box 237, Houston, B.C. Phone: (604) 845-7736.</p>	<p>Oudega (W) Hamilton Friesland Ontario 1946 September 5 1991 With praise and thanksgiving to our Lord, we announce the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents:</p> <p>TED and ANKE VELLENGA (nee Van Popta)</p> <p>We thank you for the love and care you have bestowed on all of us and pray that God will continue to bless you richly.</p> <p>Happy anniversary Dad and Mom, Grandpa and Grandma, from: Jayne & Bob Hamersma — Vineland, Ont. Paula & Case De Haan — Pella, Iowa Peter & Hennie Vellenga — Fenwick, Ont. Hette Vellenga — Harwich, Mass. Sharon & Mark Freye — Muskegon, Mich. and 12 grandchildren. Home address: 268 Magnolia Dr., Hamilton, ON L9C 6P9</p> <p>1951 1991 Medemblik St. Lazare With thanksgiving and praise to God we celebrate with our parents,</p> <p>KLAAS and ELLA BOOD (nee Sallies)</p> <p>their 40th wedding anniversary on Saturday, Aug. 24, 1991. We thank Mom and Dad for being a blessing to us and pray that their marriage continues to be so.</p> <p>With much love from: Marijke & Paul Simons — Dartmouth, N.S. John — Ottawa, Ont. Tim & Mandy — Dartmouth, N.S. Dan & Ginette — Vars, Ont. and seven grandchildren. Home address: 2920 Cumberland St., St. Lazare, PQ J0P 1V0</p> <p>Personal</p> <p>Single Men and Women if you are over 21 years of age and would like to find a partner in Christian marriage, write to: Christian Marriage Contact Service, P.O. Box 1127, Station B, Burlington, ON L7P 3S9. Please enclose \$3.00 for a complete information package explaining our services. Established in 1967.</p>	<p>Coevorden Whitby 1908 1991 On Saturday, August 10, 1991, the Lord called home</p> <p>HENDRIKJE (Hennie) DEVRIES-STEENWIJK</p> <p>Predeceased by her husband Karel on June 25, 1962. Dear mother of: Jake & Marjory DeVries — Uxbridge, Ont. Bep & Jake VanGrootheest — Courtice, Ont. Ray & Dietz DeVries — Hamilton, Ont. Anneke & Henk Berentschot — Whitby, Ont. Beloved oma of 17 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren. The funeral took place on August 13, 1991, at the Hebron Chr. Ref. Church, Whitby, Ont. Psalm 103:16, 17 Correspondence address: Mr. J DeVries, R.R. #2, Uxbridge, ON L9P 1R2</p> <p>"Nothing shall separate us from the love of God" (Rom. 8:39).</p> <p>MR. DIRK DYKSTRA beloved husband of the late Mrs. Dena Dykstra of Medicine Hat, Alta., passed away at Medicine Hat Regional Hospital on Thursday, July 25, 1991, at the age of 92 years. He is the loving father of two sons and four daughters.</p> <p>Fanny & Albert Hazelaar — Calgary, Alta. Glenn & Mattie Dykstra — Lethbridge, Alta. Shirley & John Bos — Duncan, B.C. Wyke & Fred Kruitbosch — Warburg, Alta. Peter & Nancy Dykstra — Medicine Hat, Alta. Tina & Bernard Wohlleben — Gabriola Island, B.C. 24 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren. Mr. Dykstra was predeceased by his wife Dena in 1983 and one granddaughter, Dena Dykstra, in 1987. Correspondence address: 745 Stafford Dr. N., Lethbridge, AB T1H 2B4</p> <p>Oude Pekela Brampton Jan. 11, 1900 Aug. 5, 1991 On August 5, 1991, the Lord took unto himself our dear father, grandfather and great-grandfather,</p> <p>FRED ENGELAGE at the age of 91 years. Widower of Elsje Van Der Heide since April 1, 1968, and Johanna P. Moraal (1970-1978). Dear father and father-in-law of: Antje Kloppenburg Engelage — the Neth. Bareld Fictorie (son-in-law) — the Neth. Harry & Scottie Engelage — Florida Bill & Nell Engelage — Newmarket George & Gerda Engelage — Thunder Bay Hemmo & Rena Engelage — Maple Trudy & Klaas Snyder — Cameron Jane & Peter Buys — Newmarket Hill & Matty Engelage — Whitby Frank & Frieda Engelage — Grimsby Gertie Jansma Engelage — Brooklyn Margaret & Henry Tjoelker — Newmarket Also remembered by 48 grandchildren and 83 great-grandchildren. Predeceased by one daughter, one daughter-in-law, two sons-in-law and one grandchild. The funeral was held Aug. 8, 1991, at the Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, Newmarket, Ont., Rev. Peter van Egmond officiated. Correspondence address: c/o Margaret Tjoelker, 92 Hamilton Dr., Newmarket, ON L3Y 3E8</p>
<p>Birth</p> <p>VAN HARTEN: "Boy." Oh boy! We, Leonard and Grace, praise God for creating our son,</p> <p>JONAH HENDRIK entrusted to us July 11, 1991. He is welcomed by his big sisters, Rachel, Heather, and Emily, who are now accustomed to the difference. Jonah is the ninth grandchild for Henk and Aukje Van Harten, Brantford, Ont., and the sixteenth grandchild for Popke and Jantje Veenbaas, Abbotsford, B.C. Home address: 119 Brock St., Brantford, ON N3S 5V6</p>	<p>Marriages</p> <p>GUICHELAAR-CARNIELLO: Conrad and Ann Guichelaar of Brantford, Ont., are happy to announce the marriage of their daughter,</p> <p>SHARON to CLAUDIO</p> <p>son of Marcello and Norina Carniello of Niagara Falls, Ont. The wedding took place on August 10, 1991, at Covenant Chr. Ref. Church, St. Catharines, Ont., Rev. J. Vos officiated. Future address: 198 Scott St., Apt. #515, St. Catharines, ON L2N 1S2</p>			

Classified

<div>Obituaries<p>Wommels (Fr.) the Netherlands On July 29, 1991, the Lord called home our beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,</p><p>CORNELIA STRIKWERDA-VAN ROUKEMA at the age of 93 years. Loved wife of the late Sake Strikwerda. Beloved mother of: Jack & Leah De Haan — Warminster Folkert & Tine Wesseling — Wommels Ann & the late Albert Taekema — Drayton James & the late Lammie Strikwerda — Bowmanville Lisa Strikwerda — Orillia Bob & Leonora Strikwerda — St. Catharines Jim & Sandra Strikwerda — Montreal Psalm 150.</p></div> <div>Help Wanted<p>Dairy farm needs reliable, enthusiastic person full time, starting September or December. Call (416) 627-7874.</p><p>Social service work — Mutual Support Systems, a network of rural group homes in the Niagara Peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties, invites applications for the position of Child Care Worker. The responsibilities of this live-in position include involvement in the educational programming of the residents, scheduling daily routines, as well as planning special events, all in a family setting. In-service training provides an excellent opportunity for personal growth and skill development at role modelling positive relationships and facilitating the resident's successes. Position includes salary and benefits package. Position commences in September. Please submit resume to Personnel Manager, Mutual Support Systems, R.R.#1, Perry Rd., Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0. Telephone: (416) 899-2311.</p></div> <div>Vacation<p>Lakewood Christian Campgrounds R.R. #5, Forest, ON N0N 1J0 Phone (519) 899-4415 or (519) 245-1225 Lakewood consists of 125 acres of land, ponds, wooded trails, a creek, family camping and group camping area. Large pool facilities. Long nature and biking trails.</p></div> <div>For Rent<p>For rent: basement apartment. Light, roomy and furnished. Suitable for one person — responsible, non-smoker. Hwy.'s 400 and 401 area. Close to public transportation. Toronto: (416) 244-6261.</p><div><p>Don't rob yourself of more business — advertise in our classified pages!</p></div></div>	<div>Real Estate<p>EMPTY DAIRY FARMS, 2 to choose from. Equipped and ready for your cows and quota. Call Jack Huitema. 5,000 BROILER BREEDERS, on small acreage. 4 br. brick house with fully automated barn. Call Jack Huitema. DAIRY FARM, with cows, quota and machinery. Newer 4 br. home, highway location in Southern Ont. On-going operation, good financing, priced right. Call Jack Huitema. MARKET GARDEN SOIL: #1 - 49 acres, 4 br. 2-storey home with many improvements, barn 30x65, 2 water wells, pond, \$185,000. #2 - 70 acres sandy loam, 3 br. 1½ storey home, 2 barns, paved rd. \$200,000. Located in Dunnville area. Call Frank Bucsis, Assoc. Broker. 17,000 CHICKEN BROILERS, 24 acre market garden land, very good barn, 2 br. home, Flamborough area, selling for health reasons. Call Keith Miller. 13,000 CHICKEN BROILERS, 14 acres, nearly new barn, 3 br. brick ranch. Call Keith Miller. 35,000 CAGE LAYERS, 100 acres, excellent hi-rise barn, 5 br. home. Call Keith Miller. 8,000 BROILER BREEDERS, 50-acre land, plus barn for dairy, very good 3 br. home. Call Keith Miller. The above is only a partial list of the many poultry, dairy and hog farms available. Keith Miller & Associates Realty Ltd., 220 Broad St. E., Dunnville, ON N1A 1G2 1 (416) 774-7624; Keith Miller, 774-4077; Frank Bucsis, 774-6284; Jack Huitema, 774-8291; Hans Knuth, 957-7618; Pam Dashwood, 774-4764; Sylvia Holstein, 765-2981.</p></div> <div>Help Wanted</div>	<div>For Rent<div>Lowest Car Rental Rates by Lokhorst Holland Schiphol Airport CAMPER RENTALS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitive weekly and monthly rates• Large selection of makes and modelsToronto office: (416) 492-5494 31 Wagon Trailway Willowdale, ON M2J 4V4</div></div> <div>Help Wanted</div>	<div>Help Wanted<div>MEDICAL SECRETARY<p>Approximately eight hrs. per week. Minimum two years of experience. Basic computer and bookkeeping skills required. Send resume and references to:</p><p>Dr. J. Lock 25 Ravine Drive Dundas, ON L9H 6K8</p></div><div>YOUTH PASTOR<p>The First Chr. Ref. Church, Abbotsford, B.C., is looking for a youth pastor (ordained/unordained) to strengthen and coordinate the congregation's ministry to and with youth. Church profile and job description available. Please send resumes and inquiries to:</p><p>Search Committee, Abbotsford 1st CRC, P.O. Box 485, Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 5Z5 or contact R. Vanderwal (604) 823-6342</p></div><div>Seeking a Pastor<p>The First Christian Reformed Church of Medicine Hat, Alberta, a congregation of 86 families, is prayerfully seeking a new pastor to lead us in worship and into a mature Christian congregational life. If, as a pastor, you feel God may be leading you to our congregation, please write us for further information and church profile. Contact: Marian Bos, c/o Box 871, Medicine Hat, AB T1A 7G8.</p></div></div>
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Classified/Events

Miscellaneous	Events	Events	Events	Events
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LONDON CAMPUS MINISTRY

of the Christian Reformed Church
at the University of Western Ontario
and Fanshawe College
invites students to:

Friday, September 6, 5:00 - 7:00 PM, **FIRST YEAR STUDENT BBQ:**
If this is your first year of school in London (whether you're an undergraduate, mature, or post-graduate student) you are invited to a BBQ at Ken and Anita Boonstra's house, 1035 Brough St., 438-1242.

Sunday, September 8, 6:00 PM, **WELCOME TO STUDENTS worship:**
The First Christian Reformed Church of London, 513 Talbot St., welcomes you to worship and fellowship with a special evening service. Call Ken Boonstra if you need a ride. After the service there will be coffee and dessert at the Boonstra's.

Wednesday, September 11, 5:30 PM, **COST SUPPER FELLOWSHIP:**
Our weekly student fellowship suppers and discussions will begin on this date with a time of PRAISE AND PRAYER at the Boonstra's, 1035 Brough St.

Please call **Ken Boonstra** at (519) 438-1242 for more information.



Queens University
Kingston Campus Ministry

OPEN HOUSE GENEVA FELLOWSHIP

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
August 31, 1991
104 Queen's Cr.

Dr. Bill Van Groningen
Campus Pastor,
(613) 545-2962

Help Wanted

Calvinist Contact is in need of a Journalist

to work three days a week
out of the Niagara region

Position open immediately. Please apply to the editor and
supply resume. Training and experience desirable.

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The Guelph Christian Reformed Churches invite
**University of Guelph Students with their Friends and
Families** to worship and fellowship

on
September 8, 1991

at

4:00 p.m. - New Life Christian Reformed, 75 Norfolk St.
5:00 p.m. - First Christian Reformed, 287 Water St.
6:15 p.m. - Fellowship Supper sponsored by both
congregations at First CRC, 287 Water St.

**Please make our congregations your church home away from home
during your stay in Guelph.**

For more information contact John Te Bokkel
(519) 837-0598

We are pleased to announce that Maria Barten is our
Housing Coordinator - (519) 837-3495 - for anyone
yet looking for accommodation this fall.

Welcome to Guelph! Let's get acquainted!

Attention Students:

HURON CAMPUS MINISTRY

"The Church in the Woods"
The Waterloo CRC

warmly invites all new Waterloo-area students, their parents and
friends to a

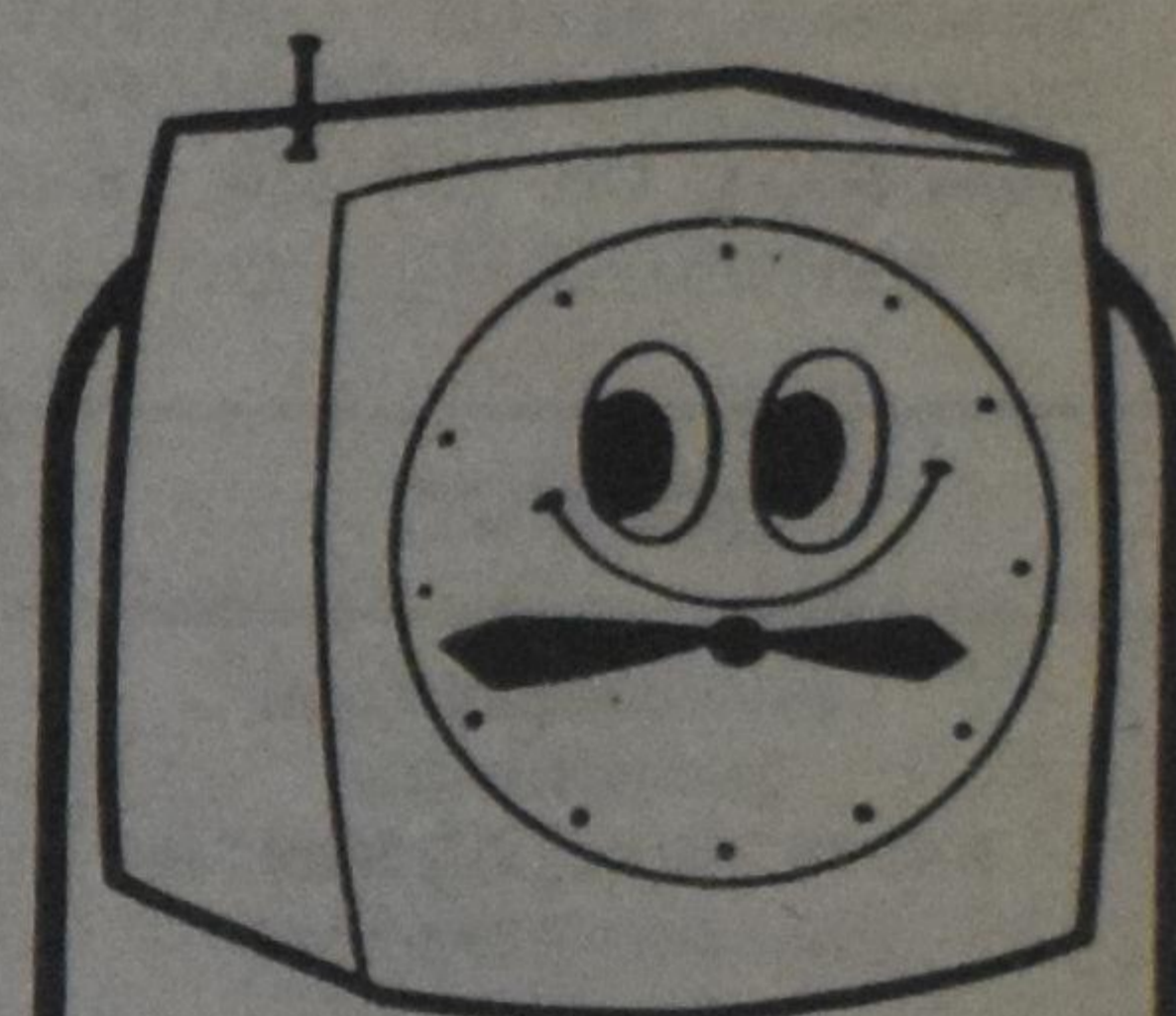
SPECIAL STUDENT WELCOME SERVICE SUNDAY, SEPT. 8, 1991, at 10:00 A.M.

After the service information about Huron Campus Ministry will
be presented and an excellent luncheon provided.

The HCM FELLOWSHIP begins Sept. 11, 1991, in McKirdy Hall, St.
Paul's College at 4:30 p.m. Please contact Chaplain Graham E.
Morbey (886-1474) for further information and assistance.

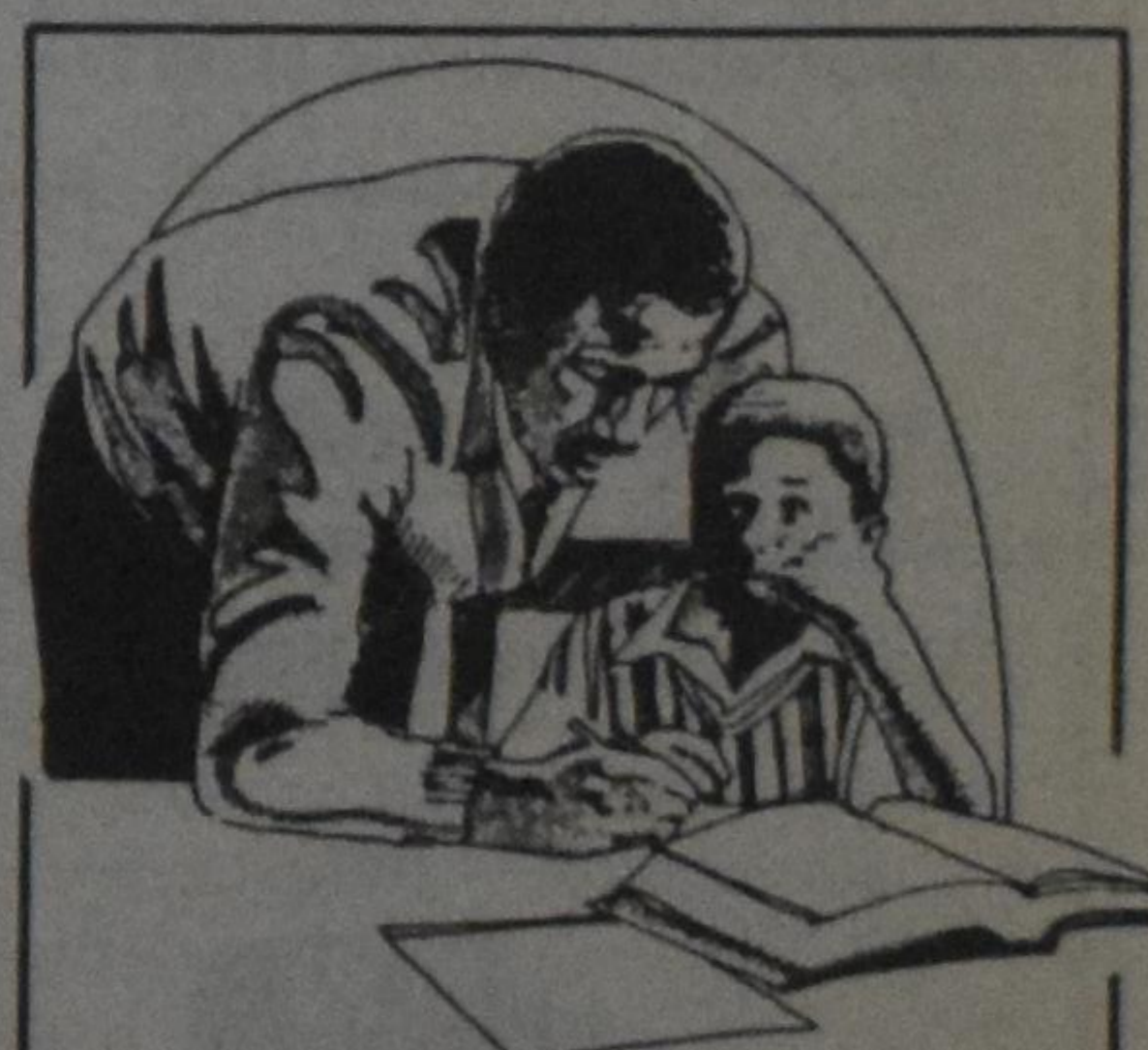
The Waterloo Christian Reformed Church is located at 209
Bearing Rd., off Albert St.

See Peter & Marja
on page 15.



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COMMITTEE OF CONCERNED MEMBERS of the Christian Reformed Church THIRD ALL-ONTARIO CONFERENCE



"REFORMATION THROUGH DISCIPLINE"

September 20 & 21, 1991

Maranatha
Christian Reformed Church
Woodstock, Ontario

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1991

7:30 - 8:15 p.m. Registration and Coffee
8:15 p.m. Conference Opening
- The Conference Committee-
8:30 p.m. Simon Beldman presiding
Speaker:
Rev. Joel VanderKooi
Address: "Reformation
Through Self Discipline"

Coffee Social following

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1991

8:30 - 9:15 a.m. Registration and Coffee
9:15 - 9:30 a.m. Opening Devotions:
Rev. Jerry VanDyke
9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Rev. VanDyke presiding
Speaker: Rev. Ray Lanning
Address: "Reformation
Through Mutual Discipline"
10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Coffee
11:00 - 12:00 p.m. Sectional Workshops
12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Lunch
1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Discussion with questions and
answers including all speakers
2:30 - 3:00 p.m. Coffee
3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Mark Zylstra presiding
Speaker: Rev. Paul Murphy
Address: "Reformation
Through Church Discipline"
4:00 p.m. Closing - Mark Zylstra

REGISTRATION FORM

CONCERNED MEMBERS

THIRD

ALL-ONTARIO CONFERENCE

Pre-registration is encouraged.
If, however, you are unable to register on or before
September 7, 1991, do feel free to register at the
Conference.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Prov./State: _____

Code: _____

Phone: _____

COST: Early Registration \$25.00 per person
Late Registration \$27.00 per person
\$40.00 per couple \$42.00 per couple
Student Registration \$15.00

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Please make your cheque or money order payable to:
CCMCRC.

For registration or more information write:

Mr. Mark Zylstra
P.O. Box 2014, Station B
St. Catharines, ON
L2M 6P5

Reaching out to seafarers — three ways

Barend Biesheuvel

Daniel is a Christian. He reads his Bible, prays regularly and his relationship with God is important to him. The other men on board know that he is a religious person. And they respect him for that. At times it is difficult for him to keep a vibrant faith when he's far away from his home and his church community in Nigeria for sometimes more than a year at a time.

That's why Daniel is delighted whenever his ship docks in a port where there is a Christian seafarers club, where he can talk with the chaplain about his faith, and where he can attend a worship service.

Achmed is a Muslim. Sometimes he likes to get into a serious discussion about the differences between the Bible and the Koran. Or about there being "only one God, and not

three" according to the Old Testament. Therefore he doesn't shy away from the Christian harbour chaplains who come on board in many ports in the world. Also, his religion expects from him that he live a very moral life, and so he much appreciates Christian seafarers' clubs where values similar to his own are promoted and practised. Sometimes Achmed will attend a Christian worship service, but his own faith is strong and not easily shaken. On board he faithfully keeps up the Muslim tradition of praying five times a day, and when he's home in Egypt he regularly attends services at the local mosque.

Ivan's knowledge about the Christian faith is rather limited. His parents never taught him much about it and he never attended church. But

his grandmother used to read stories to him when he was a little child, and somehow her convictions have left an impression on him. He thinks he believes in a Supreme Being, but he's not sure that he can accept that this could be the God of the Bible. Moreover, he doesn't understand, as yet, the notion of salvation by grace.

So Ivan is somewhat open to a discussion about the teachings of the Christian faith. And, yes, he would be interested in taking a copy of the New Testament in his native Russian. This way he will be able to read in it during the coming voyage and we agree to talk again when he returns in a month or so.

Representing three groups

Seafarers from all over the world walk into our Centre every day of the year. In fact, an average of 30 to 35 come in every day. During a recent week Daniel, Achmed and Ivan were among them. And in a way they represent three different groups of people to whom we minister.

There are the Christians, who need fellowship, encouragement, and opportunities for worship. And so we happily enter into fellowship with them. We talk and discuss, we give them study materials and books and together we pray and worship. We encourage them to get together with other Christians on board and have a regular time of Bible study and prayer. We discuss ways in which they can be witnesses on board in how they do their work, live their lives, and talk about God. In short, we try to provide the best possible pastoral care during the few days that they are in our port.

On the other end of the spectrum there are people whose minds are made up about their basic beliefs. They

are committed to their non-Christian religion. We gently probe a bit into their thinking, but when we find the doors closed, we simply continue our "outreach" by showing them Christian hospitality and respect. Maybe God will reveal himself to them in some way at some point, but in the meantime we try to be the best possible imitators of Christ towards them. We want them to "know that we are Christians by our love."

And then there are those whom God may have brought to us because he is planning to bring them to himself. As with the others, we try to be God's instruments. With gentleness and respect, we seek to impress on them the claims of God's Word. Whenever there is an opportunity we explain God's plan of salvation and we make clear that God's love reaches out to anyone who is willing to receive it. Also, we want them to recognize Jesus in us and so we show them hospitality and help them in many different ways. During times of worship and evening meditations, they will hear the proclamation of the Word of God. And in personal conversations, both on board and at the Centre, we try to reinforce and explain what we are doing in our ministry of word and deed.

We'll give them a Bible in their own language. Maybe we'll have a devotional book. We take time to answer many questions and to help in any way we can.

Changed lives


And from time to time we are witnesses of a changed life. A seafarer may tell us that he's become convinced of God's claim on him. Or he may write us later and relate the events that lead up to his conversion. Sometimes a seafarer returns to port a year or more later and tells us how our ministry in the past influenced his thinking in such a way that he had since decided to become a follower of Christ. But most never return to Montreal and so we are sure that there are others that we don't know about. And we are convinced that God is using us, with or without us knowing it specifically, both "to guard his flock and to increase it."

Three ways in which the Ministry to Seafarers in Montreal reaches out on behalf of the Christian Reformed Church. And the prayers of God's people all across the continent are part of this ministry. May it continue to bear fruit.

Chaplain Barend Biesheuvel is acting director of the Seafarers Centre in Montreal.


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Weekly puzzle

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ACROSS

1 Pope's triple crown

6 Heb. month

10 Bronze and Iron

14 Felix or Luther

15 Emerald Isle

16 Electrical unit

17 CA strait

19 A Logan

20 Crafty

21 Fastener

22 Auto part

24 Astronomical unit

26 Deputy

27 Fleet

30 Selected

32 — daggers (glare)

33 "Uncle Tom's Cabin" author

34 Big bird

37 Difficult choice

40 Unlawful

42 Ancient

43 Tanker

45 Taj Mahal site

46 Herds

48 Diminish

50 Shakespearean spirit

52 Try hard

54 Jamaican music

56 — sapiens

57 A feast — famine

60 Heroic tale

61 Poe story

64 Roman way

65 Memo

66 — da gamba

67 Jewellery stone

68 Mimic

69 Grig catcher

11 Product of fabled goose

12 Author Glasgow

13 Begin

18 Not a one

23 Artist's need

24 Prod

25 Singing group

27 Actor Ray

28 Render turbid

29 Vamp's kin

31 "Wise" bird

33 Markdown events

35 Horse

36 — Bator

38 Money

39 1004

41 Comfort

44 Art lover

47 Look upon

48 Luxurious auto

49 Develop

50 Musical beat

51 Vaquero's rope

53 O.K.

55 Volcano in Sicily

57 Ancient Gr. coin

58 Hold sway

59 Bacterial culture base

62 Distance

63 Sine — (indefinitely)

Calendar of Events

Aug. 23

RCBPO Chatham Chapter meets at 7 a.m. at Smittys, Chatham, Ont. For info. call Win Elzinga at (519) 354-2193.

Aug. 25

Dutch service at the CRC, Ancaster, Ont., 3 p.m., led by Rev. H.R. DeBolster.

Aug. 28

RCBPO Niagara Chapter meets at 7 a.m., CLAC office, St. Catharines, Ont. For info. call Gary Van Dyk at (416) 934-9952.

Aug. 28-Sept. 11

"Vrouwen van Oranje," important women of the House of Orange from 1506 to 1991 dramatically displayed: **Aug. 28:** 7:30 p.m., Maranatha CRC, St. Catharines, Ont.; **Aug. 30:** 2 p.m., CRC, Smithville, Ont.; **Aug. 31:** 7 p.m., Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ont.; **Sept. 3:** 7:30 p.m., Holland Chr. Homes, Brampton, Ont.; **Sept. 4:** 7:30 p.m., Chr. School Gym, Jarvis, Ont.; **Sept. 5:** 7:30 p.m., Mount Hamilton CRC, Hamilton, Ont.; **Sept. 6:** 7:30 p.m., Knox Chr. School Gym, Bowmanville, Ont.; **Sept. 7:** 2 p.m., CRC, Willowdale, Ont.; **Sept. 9:** 7:30 p.m., Chr. School Gym, Woodstock, Ont.; **Sept. 10:** 8 p.m., Lambton Chr. High School, Sarnia, Ont.; **Sept. 11:** 8 p.m., New Street CRC, Burlington, Ont. For info. call Jan De Vries at (416) 8266 or Steve Stelpstra at (416) 632-1400.

Sept. 13

CCM-Kitchener resumes study of Belgic Confession (Art. 8) at 8 p.m. in Faith Missionary Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Sept. 14

"Bond van Wapenbroeders" will have a Canada

Sept. 19

Day in Kitchener, Ont. A delegation from Holland will be present. For info. call Chris (648-5155) or Bert (522-2376).

Sept. 20-21

CFPO Provincial Board meets at Muddy Duck Restaurant, 360 Steeles Ave., Milton, Ont. (south of Hwy. 401, just east of Hwy. 25). For info. call (519) 837-1620.

Sept. 21

Third All-Ontario Conference of the Committee of Concerned Members of the CRC. At Maranatha CRC, Woodstock, Ont. Speakers: Revs. J. Vander Kooi, Ray Lanning and Paul Murphy. For info. call (416) 562-4276.

Sept. 21

The 1991 fall retreat for "Aware" at First CRC, Taunton Rd., Toronto, Ont. From 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. An opportunity to talk about many sides of lesbian/gay life inside or on the edge of the church. \$5 charge for lunch and refreshments. For info. call Linda at (416) 694-3857.

Oct. 9

RCBPO (Hamilton/Wentworth Chapter) meets at 7:45 p.m., Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. For info. call (416) 524-1203.

Oct. 12-13

Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Ottawa Christian School, Ottawa, Ont. For info. call (613) 722-5836.

Oct. 19

"Netherlands Bazaar" from 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. at the Thornhill Community Centre, Thornhill, Ont. Crafts, baking flowers, white-elephants, restaurant. Admission free. All proceeds to needy families of Dutch descent in Ontario.

Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Church history

A life of faith in the 16th century Netherlands

David Joris



and Dutch
Anabaptism
1524-1543

Gary K. Waite

David Joris and Dutch Anabaptism, 1524-43, by Gary K. Waite. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1990. Hardcover, 235 pp., \$27.95. Reviewed by John Valk, Christian Reformed campus pastor in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

The teachings of Martin Luther had become well-known in the Netherlands by 1519 and they created a wave of anti-clericalism and iconoclasm, with ultimate goals of reforming society in general and religion in particular.

One attempt at change occurred with the Radical Reformation. This movement was more commonly known as Anabaptism for its practice of believers' (re)baptism. It was a rather extreme departure from Catholic ecclesiastical tradition and frequently resulted in severe persecution. One prominent figure in this movement was David Joris, a glass-painter from Delft.

In an interesting and readable manner Gary Waite highlights the role of David Joris in Dutch Anabaptism. According to Waite, Joris was adored by many supporters "who willingly risked their lives and shared their resources to keep their beloved leader alive." For a time he was one of the most influential leaders, competing with Menno Simons and others for control of the movement.

Waite positions Joris between two extremes in Anabaptism: the pacifism of Menno Simons and the radicalism of Thomas

Munster. Joris was initially quite active in the early anti-clericalism and iconoclasm. But after his arrest and the execution of a close associate, Joris toned down his reforming activities.

Threat of persecution

The threat of persecution weighed heavily on him. The ultimate sacrifice could be expected any time for this radical form of belief. As a result, Joris adopted Nicodemism, a practice which allowed participation in Catholic or Reformed services in order to avoid detection by the authorities.

Joris's moderate outlook brought him close to Melchior Hoffman. Hoffman and his Melchiorite followers believed that the truth of God was communicated to the believer by the Holy Spirit, not by the text itself. This almost sole reliance on the Holy Spirit prompted Luther to state that Anabaptists had "swallowed the Holy Spirit, feathers and all."

Joris's initial theology included a passive reception of the Word of God, an anti-intellectual hermeneutic and a belief in the physical return of Christ. He also asserted that Christians were not to engage in violent insurrection, but rather to take up the "sword of faith" to establish the Kingdom of God.

Polygamy was practised by some Anabaptists. Although Joris condoned it he did not practise it himself. He insisted instead that sex be confined strictly to procreation. Couples were also to remove lust entirely from their sexual relations. Some engaged in naked rituals as a test, prompting the charge by authorities of public nudity.

The art of compromise

From 1536-39 Joris was the most important Anabaptist leader in the Netherlands. His following was largely urban based and included some elite members of society. His became the art of compromise, as he steered a leadership path less radical and less separatist.

Visions early in Joris's life convinced him of his religious vocation, and he now sought to win support. He tried to sway the post-Munster radicals and the Strasbourg Melchiorites on the strength of his inner spiritual enlightenment. But they remained unconvinced largely due to Joris's inability to provide rational and scriptural proof for his leadership claims.

This failure to establish himself as leader of the Anabaptists accelerated Joris's move toward spiritualism.

During his seclusion in Antwerp (1539-44) he developed an obscure spiritual language. He eradicated all expectations of a tangible fulfilment of the eschatological kingdom or the physical return of Christ. He began to focus more on his own authority, claiming divine agency as the promised "Third David" who would transform all things.

Incognito

Joris's voluntary exile to Basel in 1544 ended his relentless persecution. He lived a rather wealthy and distinguished life under the pseudonym (Johann) van Brugge, his birth place. Although he became rather prolific in his writing, his years as a charismatic leader were all but over, however. His narcissistic conception as the apocalyptic agent of God was down-played. He maintained the doctrine of the "Third David," but no longer applied it to himself. He became less critical of the wealthy and especially of the learned.

Joris's significant lifestyle change in Basel also created certain difficulty with his followers. His strongest adherents, not the least his own son-in-law Blesdijk, became severely critical of his luxurious habits. They were especially scandalized by his sexual liaison with a certain Anna van Berchem.

Three years after his death in 1556 it was discovered that Johann van Brugge was the notorious heretic of the Low Countries. His body was disinterred and publicly burned at the stake along with his writings. Waite gives us an in-depth and balanced reading of a prominent Anabaptist who has not received much charitable or scholarly recognition. Waite employs a lucid and intelligible style, with good chapter headings, helpful chapter divisions, supportive notation, supplementary appendices, impressive bibliography and thorough index. *David Joris* is an excellent contribution to the history of the Reformation period.

**Look for
our back
to school
issue next
week!**



Friends
of God

Wayne
Brouwer

Work (III)

"... Establish the work of our hands" (Psalm 90:17).

How many of us see our work as bigger than our jobs but smaller than our lives? How many of us see the creative flow between work and play, effort and rest, vocation and avocation? How many of us sing the song of Moses:

*May the favour of the Lord our God rest upon us;
establish the work of our hands for us —
yes, establish the work of our hands!*

In the *Book of Common Prayer* there's a line that goes: "All our works, begun, continued, and ended in thee!" Is that how you feel about the labours of your life?

A vocation bigger than work

The famous churchman, Cardinal John Henry Newman, could say, "God has created me to do him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which he has not committed to another. I have my mission. I have a part in a great work. I am a link in the chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do his work."

Nice sentiments, those. But what of the rest of us mere mortals? What is the work of the Lord in our lives? Is it a part of the things we do each day, on the job, in the office, at the construction site, through the corridors of the hospital, in the privacy of our study or the public frenzy of our store?

We read about Mother Teresa of Calcutta and admire the sense of vocation she has and the fulfilment she finds in her labours. Do you know how that came to her? She was once the headmistress of a girls' school in northern India and she enjoyed her work there very much. But then something happened to her. She says: "In 1964 I was going to Darjeeling to make my retreat. It was in that train I heard the call to give up all and follow him into the slums to serve him among the poorest of the poor. It was a calling within my vocation. It was a second calling. It was a vocation to give up even Loreto where I was happy, and to go out in the streets to serve the poorest of the poor."

Pious niceties

Few of us have that, though. Few of us find ourselves so sure that the work we do each day is a calling, a vocation, a God-given destiny for which we were created. We fell into our work. We happened to be there at that particular place and time. The job was available and we needed the money. We weren't searching for a mission; we were just trying to provide for ourselves or our families.

Evelyn Waugh can write: "God wants a different thing from each one of us, laborious or easy, conspicuous or quite private, but something which only we can do and for which we were created."

But that's the talk of Sunday sermons and not life as we know it during the week. That's the pious sentiment of visionaries who don't have to face the bills at the end of the month.

Come to think of it, why *should* the Lord "establish the work of our hands"? Why *should* God bother to confirm and support and encourage the efforts we put out each day?

Something more

These questions have to be answered if we want to come to the heart of Psalm 90. Why should we plead with God to "establish the work of our hands"? Moses seems to think there are a number of reasons. If we look through the rest of his song, these things come to mind:

Establish the work of our hands because our days are so short!
Establish the work of our hands because so much that we do is trite!

Establish the work of our hands because we want to share in your creative work!

We'll take a look at each of these reasons in the weeks to come.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.